SDI
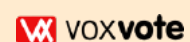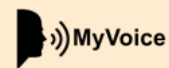
Solonian
Democracy
Institute

Digital Democracy Report '24

Roslyn Fuller, PhD
Mihajlo Jakovljev, MA, LM

aula

citizenlab

CITIZENS FOUNDATION

civocracy

decidim
free open-source democracy

Delib

Discuto

ETHELO

Every Voice Engaged

MyVoice

PlaceSpeak

KOGU Eesti Koostöö Kogu

skyVote

slido

ASSEMBLY VOTING

LOOMIO.

Voatz

VOXVOTE

DEMOCRACIA EN RED

Electis

Polis

The Solonian Democracy Institute was founded in 2017 to research and to further understanding of alternative democratic practices. In particular, the Institute looks at ways to deepen participation beyond elections and to substantially increase the number of people meaningfully involved in political decision-making. The Solonian Democracy Institute also investigates inter-disciplinary issues that have a bearing on democracy, such as economic equality. The Institute takes its name from Solon, the statesman who ushered in reforms that created the foundations for the development of democracy in ancient Athens. Solon is also credited with uttering many wise sayings, among them our slogan: Justice, even if slow, is sure. The Institute has a strong focus on the history of alternative democratic practice. What differentiates the Institute is our understanding of the term democracy which is derived from the ancient Greek word demokratia, itself composed of the words demos and kratos – people power. Putting political power in the hands of the people is at the centre of everything we do.

PART

1

Introduction 5-16

The Report profiles eDemocracy vendors from around the world and reflects a detailed landscape of the tools and platforms available today to create direct democracy online. This year we evaluated 21 Vendors from 17 countries.

PART

2

Category I 17-98

In this chapter, we provide a detailed report on 14 vendors who underwent our full rigorous assessment. After scoring vendors on Functionality, Mission / Vision, Ability to Execute, and Security, we then assign an overall Remit Score.

PART

PART

PART

3

4

5

In this chapter, we provide a report on four vendors who underwent our partial assessment. Assignment of their Remit Score was omitted as our primary objective was to draw attention to the high potential these vendors possess.

In this chapter, we provide a report on three vendors who underwent our basic assessment. Omitting most of the information our rigorous assessment demands, our primary objective was to narrow down the pool of vendors for further consideration.

In the final section, we provide attribution for photo material and list data visualisations used in our publication.

PART

1

Introduction

This report, now in its fourth edition, tracks the development of digital democracy technologies and seeks to provide an overview of the various fields of application (e.g. voting, participatory budgeting, public consultation, etc.). The goal is to provide a repository for policy makers, NGOs and academics, as well as for the democracy software industry itself. This year, we have evaluated 21 eDemocracy tools from 17 countries.

Since the publication of the last edition of this report in early 2022, the adoption of digital technology for civic purposes has undergone a turbulent period: some vendors have been acquired by larger, more generally focused, entities, while others have shuttered operations for the foreseeable future. As a result, this report looks out on a substantially altered landscape that betrays the effects of two years coping with the challenges we foresaw in our previous introduction.

These challenges were, to recap:

1. that the extreme partisanship in some social strata would lead to an intense focus on the outcomes rather than the process of democracy. We predicted that this would necessarily result in constraints and preconditions being set on participation, destroying the legitimacy of results
2. that large private foundations which had recently begun to funnel large sums of money into 'democracy'-related activities, would in following their own intense partisan goals seek to subvert equality-based democracy
3. that governments, due to the increasingly tense geopolitical situation, would seek to use digital tools to legitimize their own foreign policy goals or, conversely, discredit the ends of their alleged enemies.

While we have yet to see any noticeable impact of the third challenge, we do see a landscape that has already largely buckled under the first two, with many tools increasingly shifting their focus to rote 'engagement' with little commitment to equality, neutrality or implementation. While we have made every effort to continue to focus only on those tools which provide meaningful impact to citizens, and exclude those that do not, it cannot be denied that this field has thinned.

Despite these challenges, many of the remaining vendors continue to expand their functionality, including in the areas of electronic identification and participatory budgeting. In addition, many vendors have improved the back-end component of their software to facilitate the administrator experience.

As a research institute, we continue to apply a rigorous and demanding lens to this report. While we have provided an overall score for each vendor, each use case is different, so by outlining the strengths of every solution across multiple categories, we are hopeful that you will find the right one for you, whether you are organising a participatory budgeting project for a small community or planning a major voting exercise for a large city or even country.

The Solonian Democracy Institute remains a voluntary organisation dedicated to creating the conditions for direct, digital democracy based on Athenian democratic principles of citizen participation.

Dr. Roslyn Fuller
Managing Director
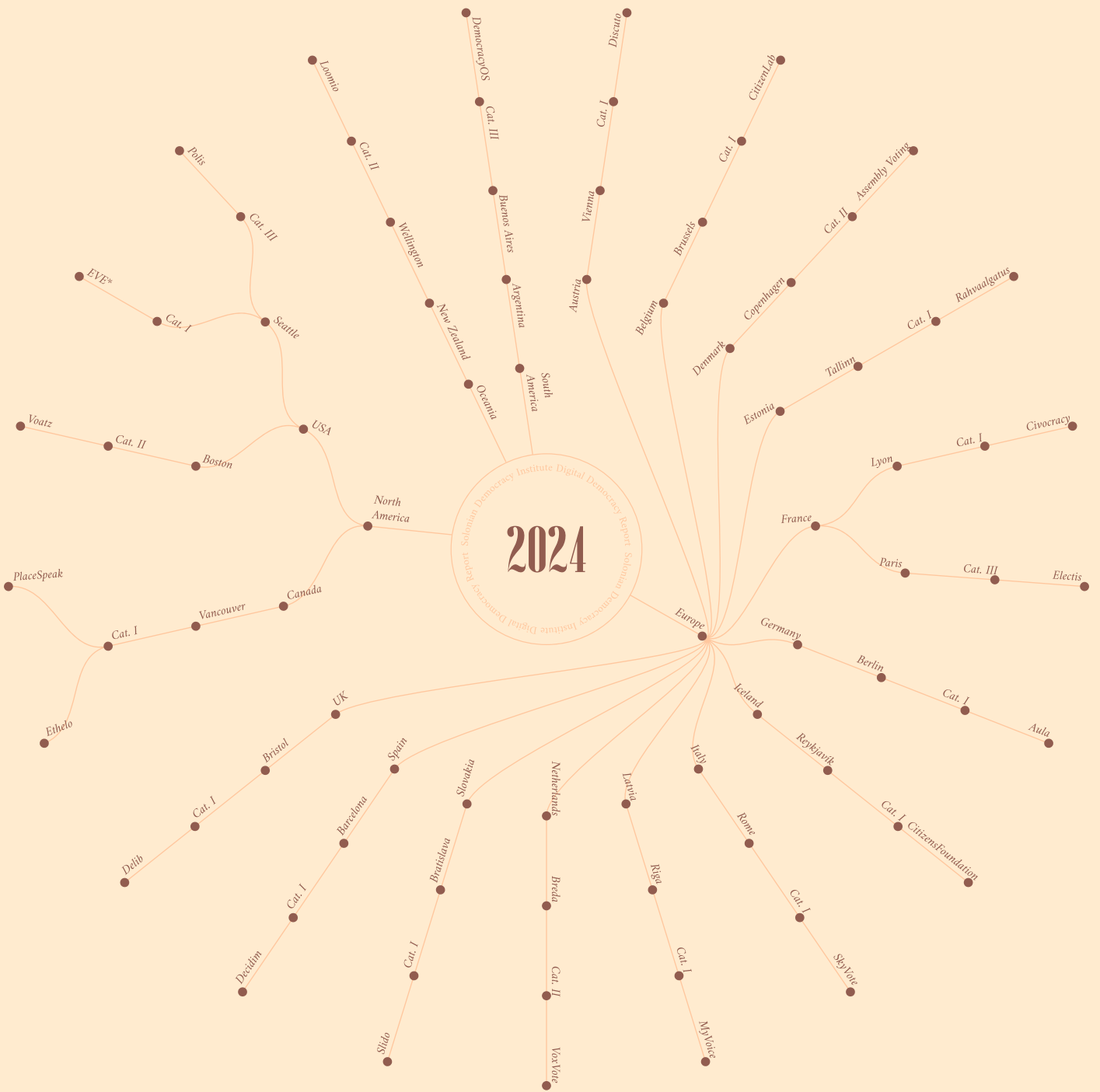*Solonian Democracy Institute*

New in this edition

For the first time we have divided vendors into three categories, according to their level of activity, as well as the level of information we have been able to independently verify. Only those belonging to the first category have been fully evaluated according to our scoring methods. The second category includes a full description of each solution, but without full scoring. Our third category includes a brief description of those vendors which exhibit less activity, or where activity could not be fully verified.

Although fewer vendors overall were analyzed, partly due to acquisitions and cessation of activities, we have still been able to expand those under review, in particular including solutions from South America and the Asia-Pacific region for the first time. In addition, we were once again able to significantly update our information and increase the interviews conducted with end users (citizens/participants) as well as clients (e.g. civil servants, politicians). These interviews were extremely insightful and provided us with a much more complete idea of the many creative ways that these tools are being used in the field, and the impact that they are having.

As always, we continue to refine our assessment criteria based on what we have learned over the past several years. This year, we dropped task automation from the functionality areas under assessment. With the advent of advanced machine learning, this focus area is better suited to a separate report. For the first time, we also included a criterium related to funding in order to determine ultimate control of any given organization, a factor that is becoming increasingly relevant in the civic landscape.

Finally, this year's report has been a joint effort, with a large portion of the workload and our much improved design being provided by our newest contributor Mihajlo Jakovljev. It would have been impossible to achieve such a high-quality report without his unwavering commitment and dedication to excellence.

2024

Solonian Democracy Institute Digital Democracy Report

Diagram nodes (radial tree):

- **North America**
  - **USA** → Seattle → Cat. I → EVE*; Boston → Cat. II → Voatz
  - Seattle → Cat. III → Polis
  - **Canada** → Vancouver → Cat. I → PlaceSpeak; Ethelo
- **South America**
  - **Argentina** → Buenos Aires → Cat. III → DemocracyOS
- **Oceania**
  - **New Zealand** → Wellington → Cat. II → Loomio
- **Austria** → Vienna → Cat. I → Discuto
- **Belgium** → Brussels → Cat. I → CitizenLab
- **Denmark** → Copenhagen → Cat. II → Assembly Voting
- **Estonia** → Tallinn → Cat. I → Rahvaalgatus
- **France** → Lyon → Cat. I → Civocracy; Paris → Cat. III → Electis
- **Europe**
- **Germany** → Berlin → Cat. I → Aula
- **Iceland** → Reykjavík → Cat. I → CitizensFoundation
- **Italy** → Rome → Cat. I → SkyVote
- **Latvia** → Riga → Cat. I → MyVoice
- **Netherlands** → Breda → Cat. II → VoxVote
- **Slovakia** → Bratislava → Cat. I → Slido
- **Spain** → Barcelona → Cat. I → Decidim
- **UK** → Bristol → Cat. I → Delib

LEGEND

○	●	●	●	●
Edition 2024	*Continent*	*Country*	*Category (Level of Analysis)*	*Vendor Name*

Cat. I: Aula (HQ: Berlin, Germany); CitizenLab (HQ: Brussels, Belgium); Civocracy (HQ: Lyon, France); Decidim (HQ: Barcelona, Spain); Delib (HQ: Bristol, United Kingdom); Discuto (HQ: Vienna, Austria); Ethelo (HQ: Vancouver, Canada); *Every Voice Engaged (HQ: Seattle, USA); MyVoice (HQ: Riga, Latvia); PlaceSpeak (HQ: Vancouver, Canada); Rahvaalgatus (HQ: Tallinn, Estonia); SkyVote (HQ: Rome, Italy); and Slido (HQ: Bratislava, Slovakia). **Cat. II:** Assembly Voting (HQ: Copenhagen, Denmark); Loomio (HQ: Wellington, New Zealand); Voatz (HQ: Boston, USA); and VoxVote (HQ: Breda, Netherlands). **Cat. III:** DemocracyOS (HQ: Buenos Aires, Argentina); Electis (HQ: Paris, France); and Polis (HQ: Seattle, USA).

Digital Democracy

When most people hear the term 'democracy', they think about elections and referenda. However, it can describe other processes as well. For the purposes of this report we have defined democratic processes as:

> *"Any process which allows citizens or residents of a country or community to meaningfully interact with their public political institutions and where that interaction results in a measurable impact on public policy"*

Democratic processes can therefore include:

- Elections (local, regional, national and supranational)
- Referenda & Petitions
- Public Consultations
- Participatory Budgeting (where part or all of a community's budget is distributed in accordance with how members of that community have voted)

Digital Democracy describes the act of digitalising democratic processes so that they can be carried out online, as opposed to in person, by post or via telephone. The tools available in this area can perform a variety of functions. For the purposes of this report we have defined <u>digital democracy tools</u> as:

> *"Software applications and/or processes which either transfer an existing democratic process online or create a new online democratic process for the purpose of either empowering the participants or seeking their input to make or validate a decision or assumption"*

While most vendors analysed in this report are digitalising existing or new democratic processes, we have also included a few vendors that currently operate in the private sector. We have included these vendors as some aspects of their technology could be adapted to operate in public democratic processes.

Methodology

Our analysis is based on a combination of self-reported and independently researched data points across a variety of criteria. Where possible we have taken advantage of the vendors' offer to analyse a test environment of their software. At a high level we have scored vendors on the following:

    A. Functionality

    B. Mission / Vision

    C. Ability to Execute

    D. Security

These categories are explained in detail below:

A: Functionality

We have assessed all vendor solutions against all functionality areas they have self-reported as being active in:

PB	**DM**	**Id**	**D/C**	**PC**
Participatory Budgeting	*Decision Making*	*Idea Generation*	*Deliberation & Consensus Building*	*Public Consultation*

In the above example, the vendor does not provide ideation or public consultation functionality, meaning that their Remit Score (see below for definition) is not affected by lack of functionality in these areas.

B: Mission / Vision

We assessed a number of factors to determine the level of change a vendor would bring to the market or wider society if their products were widely implemented:

- **Political Impact**: We assess the impact of the vendor solution on public decision-making. We give stronger weighting to vendors whose solutions increase the impact participants ('ordinary voters') are able to have on decisions than to vendors who merely help to digitalise the existing process.
- **Future-Proofing**: We assess whether the vendor seeks to optimise or replace a single, currently existing challenge of the political system or whether they have thought through a staggered approach to react to the wider availability of democracy-enhancing technology - and how this might impact their development roadmap.
- **Breadth of Vision**: While the bulk of the Remit Score for each vendor is calculated from the solution areas vendors are active in, vendors who were active in more areas received a higher score on Breadth of Vision.
- **NGO / Large Donor Funding**: A greater reliance on funding from NGOs or large donors makes it more likely that the vendor is focussed on achieving certain policy outcomes rather than on the democratic process itself, which in turn negatively impacts the vendor's ability to execute in a wide array of use cases.

C: Ability to Execute

This category assesses how well the vendor is able to translate their vision into reality. Factors that we examined here were:

- **Number of active customers**: A greater number of active customers generates more revenue as well as increased feedback from users, which in turn can be used to improve the product.
- **Concurrent Users**: Assesses the number of users that can use the platform simultaneously and thus the ability of the vendor to scale.
- **Testimonials / Case Studies**: In conjunction with the number of active customers, case studies are a good indicator of successful customer projects. We give stronger weighting to case studies where customers confirm the success of the project.

- **Workforce**: The number of full-time employees working for the vendor. We use this as a proxy to determine how established the vendor is, which will affect their ability to execute.

- **Experience**: The number of years this vendor has been active. Generally, how long an organisation has been active is an indicator of their ability to maintain a positive cash flow and the level of professionalisation (i.e. business vs. hobby).

- **Policy Impact**: Assesses whether use of the vendor's platform has resulted in political change, for example, a change in national law or local government procedure.

- **Sales Channels**: Assesses the vendor's go-to-market strategy. Generally a multi-channel sales approach is a stronger indicator of the ability to execute than e.g. only a self-serve option.

- **Unique Selling Points (USPs)** - USPs are a strong indicator of competitiveness as they increase the likelihood of winning market share if the USP is seen as desirable by the market.

The Ability to Execute section also includes two additional components, Accessibility and Customer References.

Accessibility:

For any technology solution to have a truly inclusive impact, everyone needs to be able to access it, including people living with disability. We asked all vendors to provide evidence (and sought out publicly available information where we did not receive it) on how vendors have considered accessibility in the design of their platforms.

Not implemented or no information available.

Considered as part of software design.

Follows WCAG or similar standard.

The Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) are the most common measurement of accessibility, but we have also considered similar standards in a number of countries to fairly assess vendors.

Customer References:

We asked vendors to nominate reference clients we could speak to about the functionality and usage of their platform. Reference clients were asked to score vendors on certain criteria as well as provide general feedback. The following rating criteria were used:

Assessment Area	Question	Answer Options
Expectation Setting	Did you feel that the vendor understood what you wanted to achieve?	Not at all / Somewhat / Mostly / Fully
	Did the vendor discuss any measurable KPIs or metrics with you (i.e. what good looks like)?	No / Somewhat / Yes
Advice & Guidance	Did the vendor convince you to change your original goal in any way, e.g. make you consider aspects you hadn't originally envisioned?	Original Goal / Suggested Changes (but not agreed) / Suggested Changes (agreed)
Project Success	Were you able to meet your goal?	No / Partially / Yes
Customer Service	How satisfied were you with the customer service - prior to sign-off?	Dissatisfied / Somewhat Satisfied / Fully Satisfied
	How satisfied were you with the customer service - during the project?	Dissatisfied / Somewhat Satisfied / Fully Satisfied
Feedback Loop	Did the vendor ask for feedback following the project?	No / Yes / Yes, and they responded to feedback
Recommendation	Would you recommend this vendor to other clients?	No / Depends on the circumstances / Yes

The scores in six assessment areas (Expectation Setting, Advice & Guidance, Project Success, Customer Service, Feedback Loop, and Recommendation) were calculated and visually presented.
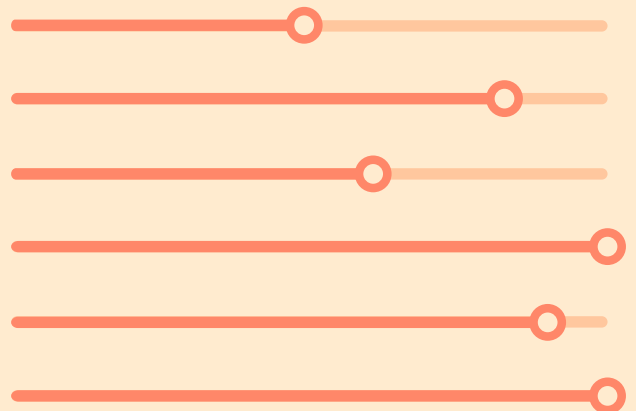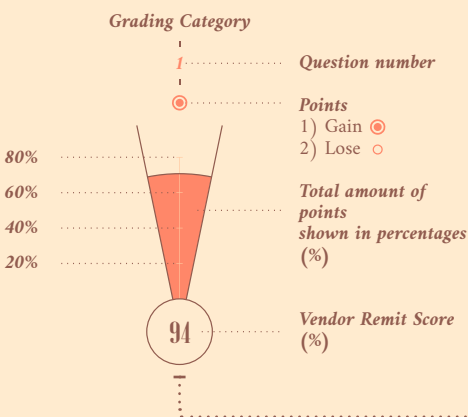
D: Security

We have assessed a number of different aspects to determine how secure a vendor solution is, such as encryption, data storage and - particularly for vendors involved in political voting - how securely a vote is protected against subsequent changes from the administrators or external parties. Please note that for the purposes of this review we are relying on information provided by the vendor and publicly available information about the solution. We have not performed our own penetration tests.

- **SSL (HTTPS) Encryption**: Does the website use standard SSL encryption to prevent the data being intercepted or changed between the user device and the server?
- **Protection of User Data**: Does the vendor take measures to protect login data (including passwords) against leaks or hackers (e.g. salting passwords, multi-factor authentication, etc.)?
- **Storage Location of User Data:** Where is user data stored (e.g. own server, hosted with mass providers such as Microsoft Azure, Amazon AWS, etc., smaller providers, on Blockchain, etc.)?
- **Blockchain Anonymity:** If the solution uses Blockchain to store voting data and prevent modification, how does the solution ensure that voters cannot be linked to their vote?

E: Combined Assessment

After scoring vendors on Functionality, Mission / Vision, Ability to Execute and Security, we then assign an overall Remit Score.

The Remit Score is calculated by dividing the overall score of the vendor by the maximum available points for the functionality areas the vendor is active in, as well as their score for Mission / Vision, Ability to Execute and Security.

The assessment for each category is displayed as a detailed data visualisation chart.
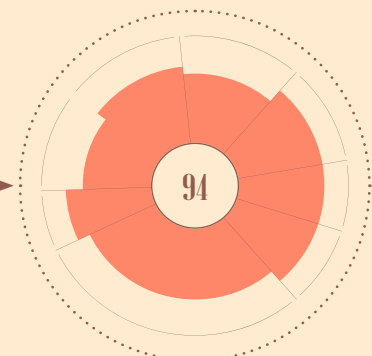
Data Visualisation Overview

In scoring each functionality area we assessed the following aspects and assigned points for each aspect:

Participatory Budgeting	Decision - Making / Voting	Deliberation / Consensus - building	Ideation	Public Consultation
1 Does the software allow users to see what the projected cost of a decision item is?	1 Are users voting on a scale?	1 Does the software show distribution of votes?	1 Does the software allow users to contribute ideas?	1 Are the results of the consultation process public?
2 Does the software allow users to see how much of the budget remains to be distributed after every decision?	2 Are users able to weight their vote on a decision item compared to other decision items in the same excercise?	2 Does the software allow for ranking of alternative voting options (e.g. different items in a PB decision)?	2 Who decides which ideas go forward to a vote?	2 Ease of use for end users to navigate and make a submission.
3 Does the software allow for logical constraints, i.e prevent users from selecting two or more contradictory options?	3 Are users able to see the average vote and is voting transparent to the user?	3 Can users comment on decisions?	3 How does the software handle a large amount of ideas?	3 Is additional information easily accessible?
4 Ease of configuring and setting up a participatory budgeting process in the software.	4 Ease of configuring and setting up a vote / decision item in the software.	4 Can users add images, videos or other forms of media?	4 Ease of setting up ideation process.	4 Does the solution allow the client to easily organize submissions (e.g. thematically)?
5 Ease of use for end users navigating the software and selecting PB options.	5 Ease of use for end users navigating the software and voting / commenting on decision items.	5 Can users paste links to external resources / websites?	5 Ease of use for end users to submit ideas into the process.	
	6 Does the software allow comparison against (and filtering by) existing voter lists or geograhic location of voters?	6 Can discussions be moderated?		

In scoring mission/vision, ability to execute, and security we assessed the following aspects and assigned points for each aspect:

Mission / Vision	Ability to Execute		Security	Bonus
1 How would a successful implementation of this software affect the position of the participant in decisions?	1 How many active customers (separate customer entities) does the vendor have?	2 How many users can the vendor's solution handle concurrently?	1 Does the website use standard SSL encryption to prevent the data being intercepted or changed between the user device and the server?	1 Unique Selling Points (USPs) - USPs are a strong indicator of competitiveness as they increase the likelihood of winning market share if the USP is seen as desirable by the market.
2 Is the vendor responding to current challenges in the area of digital democracy / participation or do they show evidence that they have thought through new challenges which digital democracy could bring and how they intend to react?	3 How many active case studies / testimonials can the vendor provide?	4 What is the number of full-time employees working for the vendor?	2 Does the vendor take measures to protect login data (including passwords) against leaks or hackers (e.g. salting passwords?)?	
3 In how many solution areas is the vendor active?	5 What is the number of years the vendor has been active in the wider field of democracy?	6 Assessing the vendor's go-to-market strategy.	3 Where is user data being stored?	
4 Where does the vendor derive its funding from?	7 Has the vendor implemented technologies to allow people living with disability to use the product?	8 Can the vendor provide an example of where their software has impacted a political policy?	4 If the solution uses the blockchain to store voting data and prevent modification, how does the solution ensure that voters cannot be linked to their vote?	
	9 Has the vendor provided contact details for reference clients?	10 Client Feedback Scores.		

Vendor Overview

Vendor	Participatory Budgeting	Decision - Making / Voting	Ideation	Deliberation / Consensus - building	Public Consultation
Aula	◇	◆	◆	◆	◇
CitizenLab	◆	◇	◆	◆	◆
CitizensFoundation	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
Civocracy	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
Decidim	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
Delib	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
Discuto	◇	◆	◆	◆	◆
Ethelo	◆	◆	◇	◆	◆
Every Voice Enagaged	◇	◆	◇	◆	◇
MyVoice	◆	◆	◆	◇	◆
PlaceSpeak	◇	◆	◆	◆	◆
Rahvaalatus	◆	◆	◆	◆	◇
SkyVote	◇	◆	◇	◇	◇
Slido	◇	◆	◆	◇	◇
Assembly Voting	◇	◆	◇	◆	◇
Loomio	◇	◆	◆	◆	◇
Voatz	◇	◆	◇	◇	◇
VoxVote	◇	◆	◇	◆	◇
DemocracyOS	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
Electis	◇	◆	◇	◇	◇
Polis	◇	◆	◆	◆	◆

◆   Vendor offers this Functionality
◆   Vendor does not offer this Functionality

The above table lists all fully analysed vendors alphabetically, regardless of the number of functionality areas they support.

PART

2

p. 18

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AULA

https://www.aula.de/

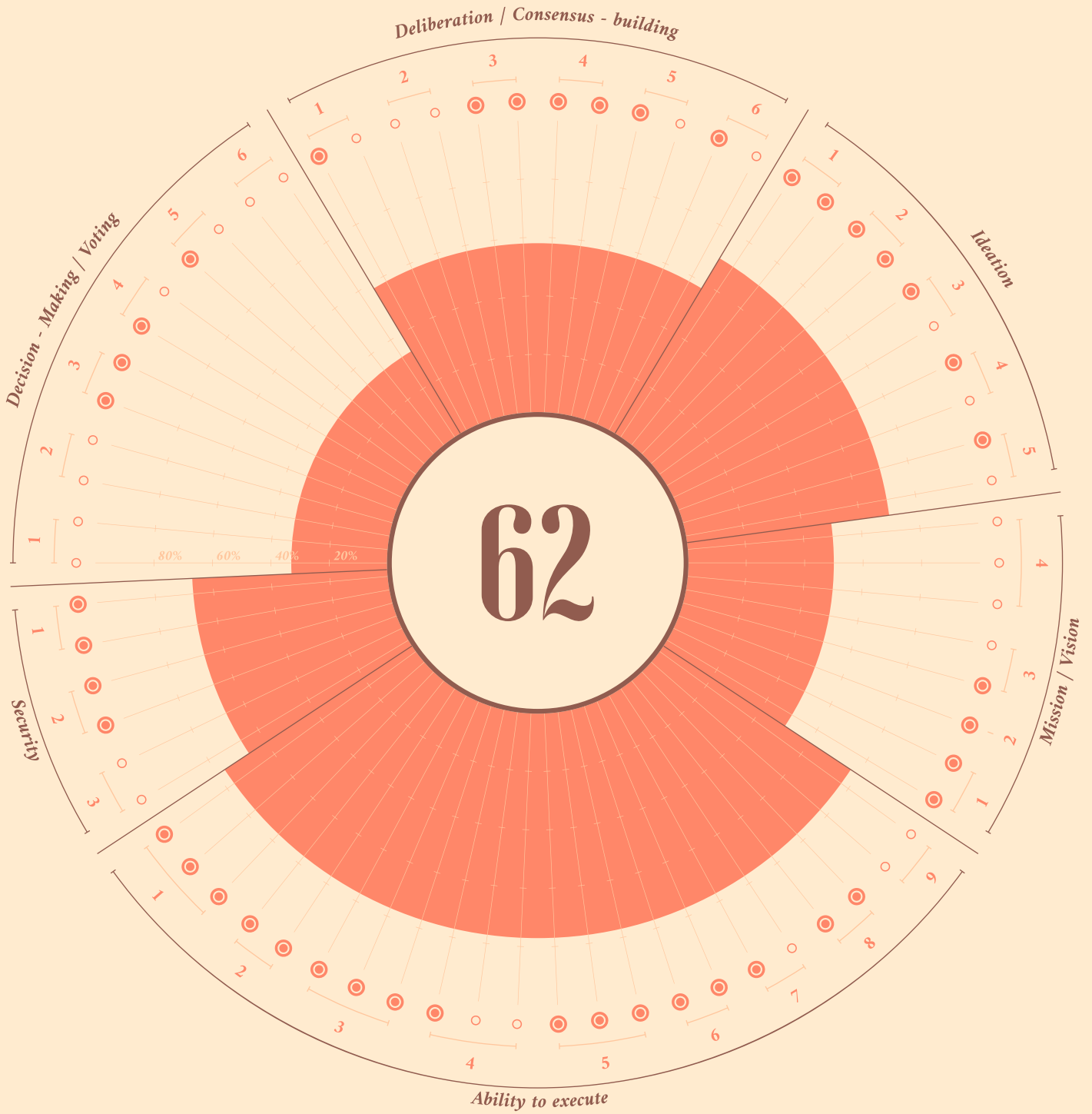*Overview*

Aula gGmbH is a German non-profit dedicated to furthering democratic activity. In particular, Aula focuses on using digital technologies to encourage children and youth to participate in political issues that directly affect their lives.

aula

Deliberation / Consensus - building

Ideation

Decision - Making / Voting

80% 60% 40% 20%

62

Mission / Vision

Security

Ability to execute

NUMBER

01

AULA DATA

Name: Aula gGmbH
Type of organisation: Non-profit
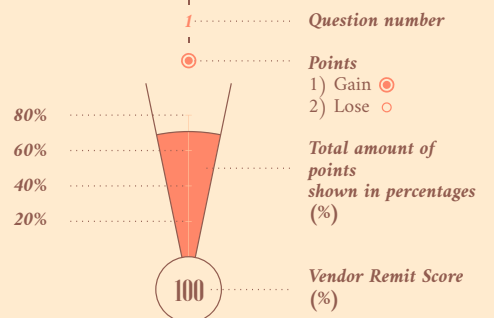Managing Director: Steffen Wenzel

Year founded:
2022

Number of Clients:
20

HQ Country:
GERMANY

Decision - Making / Voting: *4/12, 33%*
Deliberation / Consensus building: *7/12, 58%*
Ideation: *7/10, 70%*
Mission / Vision: *4/8, 50%*
Ability to execute: *17/22, 77%*
Security: *4/6, 67%*
Bonus (Unique Selling Points): *+2*
Vendor Remit Score: 86/53, 62%

LEGEND

Grading Category

1 .... *Question number*

.... **Points**
1) Gain ⊙
2) Lose ○

80% ....
60% ....
40% ....
20% ....

*Total amount of
points
shown in percentages
(%)*

100 .... *Vendor Remit Score
(%)*

PB
Participatory Budgeting

DM
Decision Making

Id
Idea Generation

D/C
Deliberation & Consensus Building

PC
Public Consultation

Scope of offering

Aula gGmbH's school democracy platform has been designed to give pupils a greater say in the day-to-day running of their school.

Aula works with schools to create a legally non-binding 'contract' in which the school agrees to implement ideas from the pupils as long as they are within the competency of the school, are feasible to implement and receive a certain quorum and the majority vote of pupils. Pupils can then brainstorm ('wild ideas' phase), ideate together with a school appointed moderator (often a teacher or a student representative), submit the idea for approval by the school and then put it to a vote. Following a positive vote, the originator of the idea then works with other pupils and teachers to implement it. Finally, all participants review the project and identify key learnings for future votes.

A key strength of the Aula system is that every component has been designed to drive accountability for the students and the school: No vote is put forward unless it is possible to implement (thereby avoiding the frustration of holding a pointless vote); the school administration agrees to refrain from blocking votes as long as they are within the agreed remit; and the originators themselves lead the implementation. Aula also provides a 60-page guide book, as well as slide decks for schools and teachers to help run the project and align it to desired learning outcomes.

A simple interface guides pupils through every step of the process. Participants can comment, up-vote / down-vote and even change or withdraw their vote while voting is open.

Aula is open-source software published under an AGPLv3 license.

Who should use this?

01   Schools and other childrens' organisations.

02   Those who want an open-source solution.

Ability to Execute

While the core team is small, Aula has created an extensive network of advisors, partners and ambassadors (school officials, teachers, etc.) to help promote its vision.

With 20 existing clients and Aula's commitment to turning clients into active users (by offering intensive training services alongside the platform product) the organisation is well-positioned to grow its client base.

Security

The Aula web portal uses standard https encryption and maintains a standard policy for handling user data. One time passwords can be used to increase security.

Aula does not use Blockchain.

NGO / Large Donor Funding
★ ★ ★

Active Customers
★ ★ ★

Customer studies
★ ★ ★

Experience
★ ★ ★

Workforce
★ ★ ★

Sales channels
★ ★

USPs
★ ★

ISO 27001

Encryption
🔒

User data
🔒

Storage
🔒 🔒

Blockchain
N/A

Accessibility
◉ ◉ ◉

Considered as part of software design.

Standout features

- Drives accountability throughout every step of the process.

- Step-by-step guide for teachers and administrators.

Mission / Vision

What on the surface looks like a simple platform for pupils, teachers and education officials to communicate more effectively, also inculcates a deeper understanding of democratic processes. This enables young people – as Aula puts it – "to alter their environment through engagement and accountability", while developing competencies in the areas of communication, collaboration, creativity and critical thinking.
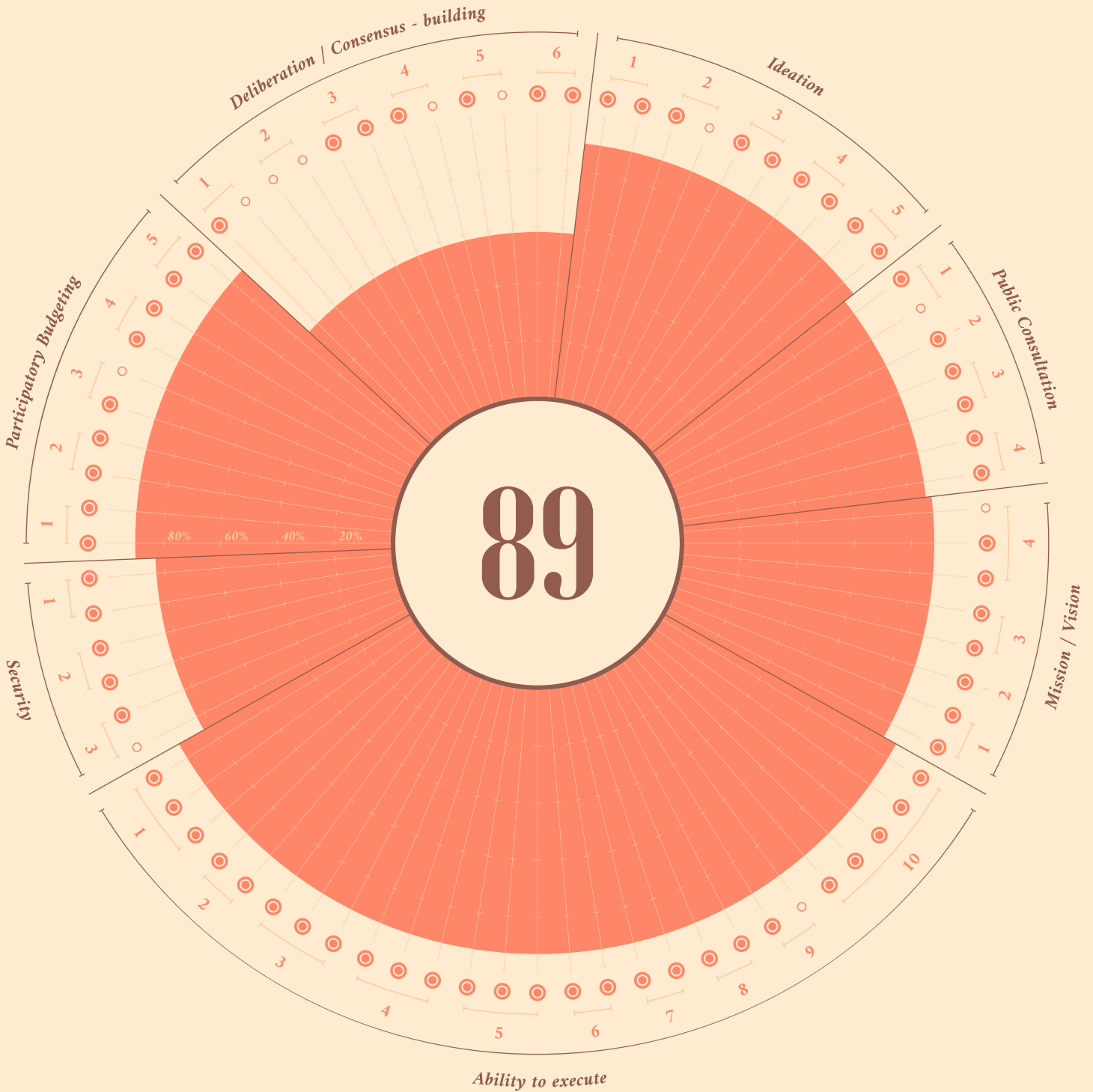
CITIZENLAB

Overview

https://www.citizenlab.co/

CitizenLab was founded in 2015 with a focus on digitalizing public participation at the local government level. It offers a wide range of capabilities, including Public Consultation, Participatory Budgeting and Ideation.

Since its inception, CitizenLab has worked with 400 governments and organizations around the world, with a monthly average of 1,000 public servants and 30,000 community members using the platform.

citizenlab

89

Deliberation / Consensus - building

Ideation

Public Consultation

Participatory Budgeting

Mission / Vision

Security

Ability to execute

80%   60%   40%   20%

NUMBER ············· CITIZEN LAB DATA ············· LEGEND

02

Name: CitizenLab
Type of organisation: Private company
CEO: Wietse Van Ransbeeck

Year founded:
2015

Number of Clients:
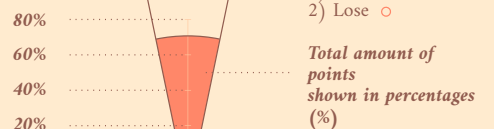**274**

HQ Country:
BELGIUM

Participatory Budgeting: *9/10, 90%*
Deliberation / Consensus building: *7/12, 58%*
Ideation: *9/10, 90%*
Public Consultation: *6/7, 86%*
Mission / Vision: *7/8, 88%*
Ability to execute: *26/27, 93%*
Security: *5/6, 83%*
Bonus (Unique Selling Points): *+2*
Vendor Remit Score: 85/96, 89%

Grading Category

1 ·········· *Question number*

Points
1) Gain ◉
2) Lose ○

Total amount of points shown in percentages (%)

80% ··········
60% ··········
40% ··········
20% ··········

100 ·········· *Vendor Remit Score (%)*

PB
Participatory Budgeting

DM
Decision Making

Id
Idea Generation

D/C
Deliberation & Consensus Building

PC
Public Consultation

Scope of offering

CitizenLab provides a comprehensive Citizen Participation Platform that lets local authorities set the level of engagement, from passive (e.g. surveys and polls), to passive-active (ideation) to active (co-creation of policy and participatory budgeting). CitizenLab's timeline feature allows residents to understand where they are in the participation process while organizers receive a detailed breakdown of decision data, including a geographical breakdown of voter preferences. Of particular note is CitizenLab's use of natural language processing which automatically groups ideas around keywords and physical locations.

CitizenLab really shines when several modules are combined to create a 'toolbox' for local decision-makers, allowing public officials to get a sense of fluctuations in public opinion as well as geographic differences in voter preferences. The software also encourages officials to communicate the outcome of decisions to voters, creating a virtuous cycle of participation.

CitizenLab has continued to improve functionality over the past two years, particularly in the back-end workflow. This includes a content builder that allows for 'drag-and-drop' design of projects, as well as internal commenting features that allow organizers to collaboratively work through engagement outcomes.

Other innovations include flexible registration (organizers can set more lenient or severe registration requirements depending on the needs of the project), and a "phygital" (physical/digital) feature focused on inputting the outcomes of offline meetings into the digital process. CitizenLab is also working to incorporate breakthroughs in AI by creating a *Sensemaking* tool that can consolidate large numbers of citizen proposals into manageable documents. To ensure transparency, the summarized content contains links to the original proposals.

Who should use this?

01 Clients who want to take advantage of a modular approach and roll out digital participation in phases.

02 Projects where a simple, highly visual interface for users is a high priority.

Ability to Execute

With a sizeable headcount (it currently employs 50 people, most of whom are based in Europe), CitizenLab is well-established with a significant marketing presence: dozens of articles in high-profile publications, professional case studies and a state-of-the-art website that includes detailed information about its products as well as the processes of digital governance.

Having won a Digital Top 50 "Best Social Impact Startup" award in 2019, CitizenLab maintains an extensive network and social media presence. Starting with smaller municipalities, CitizenLab is increasingly being used by large cities such as Copenhagen, Vienna, and Seattle. In 2022, Citizen Lab became a certified B corporation.

Security

CitizenLab's platform uses standard https encryption and users can either create an account on the platform or authenticate via Twitter, Facebook or Google. Passwords are hashed and user data is stored on AWS servers.

Standout features

- Toolbox approach is flexible to local authorities' needs on a wide variety of projects
- Particular focus on the back-end workflow and significant automation make the engagement process more efficient and less resource-intense for civil servants to implement
- Possibility to combine offline/online participation into one seamless process

NGO / Large Donor Funding
★★☆

Active Customers
★★★

Customer studies
★★★

Experience
★★★

Workforce
★★★

Sales channels
★★

USPs
★★

Encryption
🔒

User data
🔒

Storage
🔒 🔒

Blockchain
N/A

Accessibility
◉◉◉

Follows WCAG or similar standard.

Mission / Vision

CitizenLab's mission is to strengthen local democracies by improving the efficiency and legitimacy of local governments through citizen participation.

Though the main focus of CitizenLab's strategy is local government, its tools have been used by larger movements, e.g. a large national citizens' consultation in Chile in 2019, demonstrating that CitizenLab's technology has applications beyond just digitalizing local representative democracy.
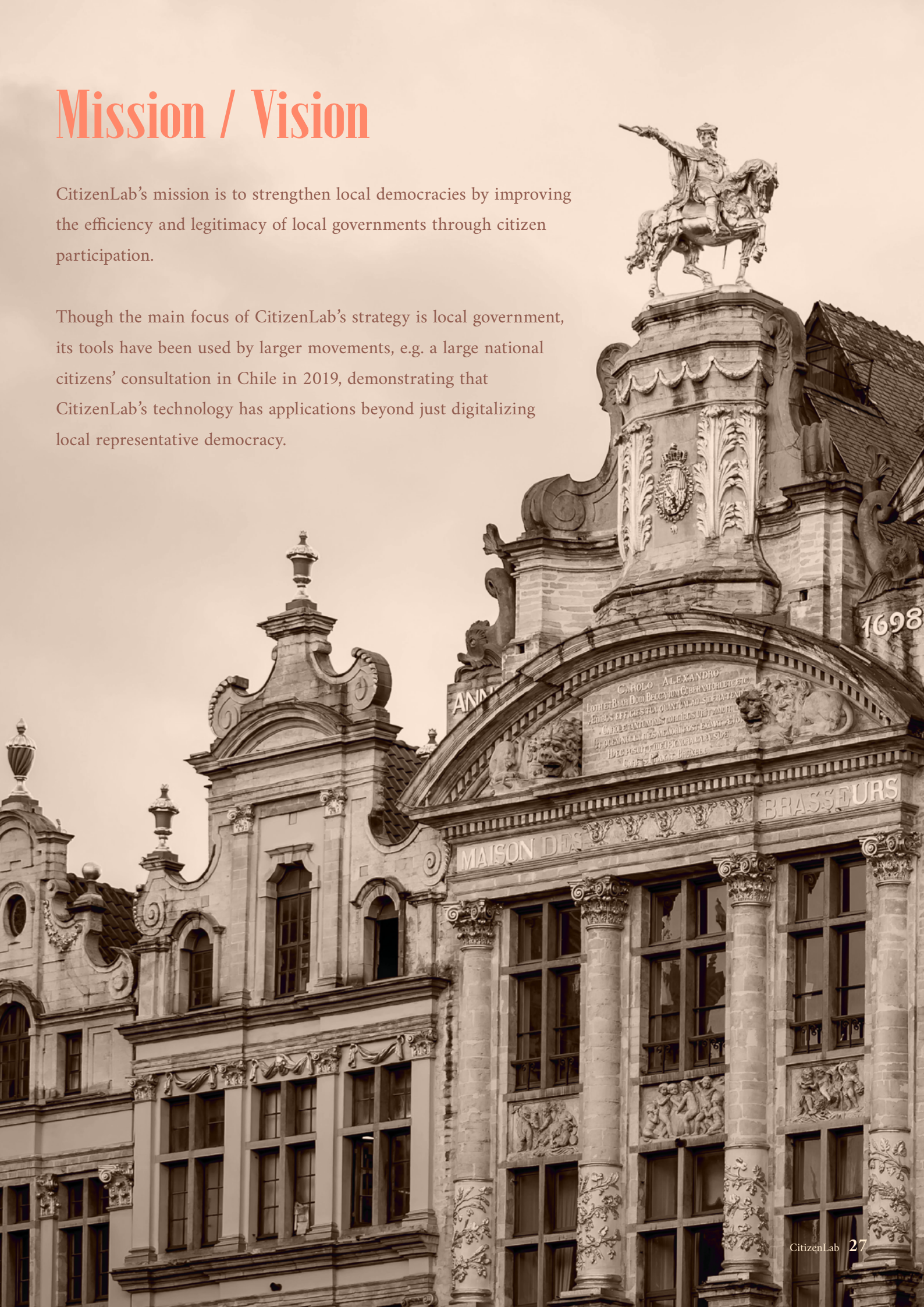
Client Feedback

CitizenLab received positive feedback across all aspects of the customer lifecycle. Of particular note was CitizenLab's product feedback cycle which involved regular surveys and detailed, proactive communication on any product changes, as well as the overall advice and guidance to clients throughout the implementation. Constructive, albeit minor, feedback was received in the area of expectation setting and the administrator experience.
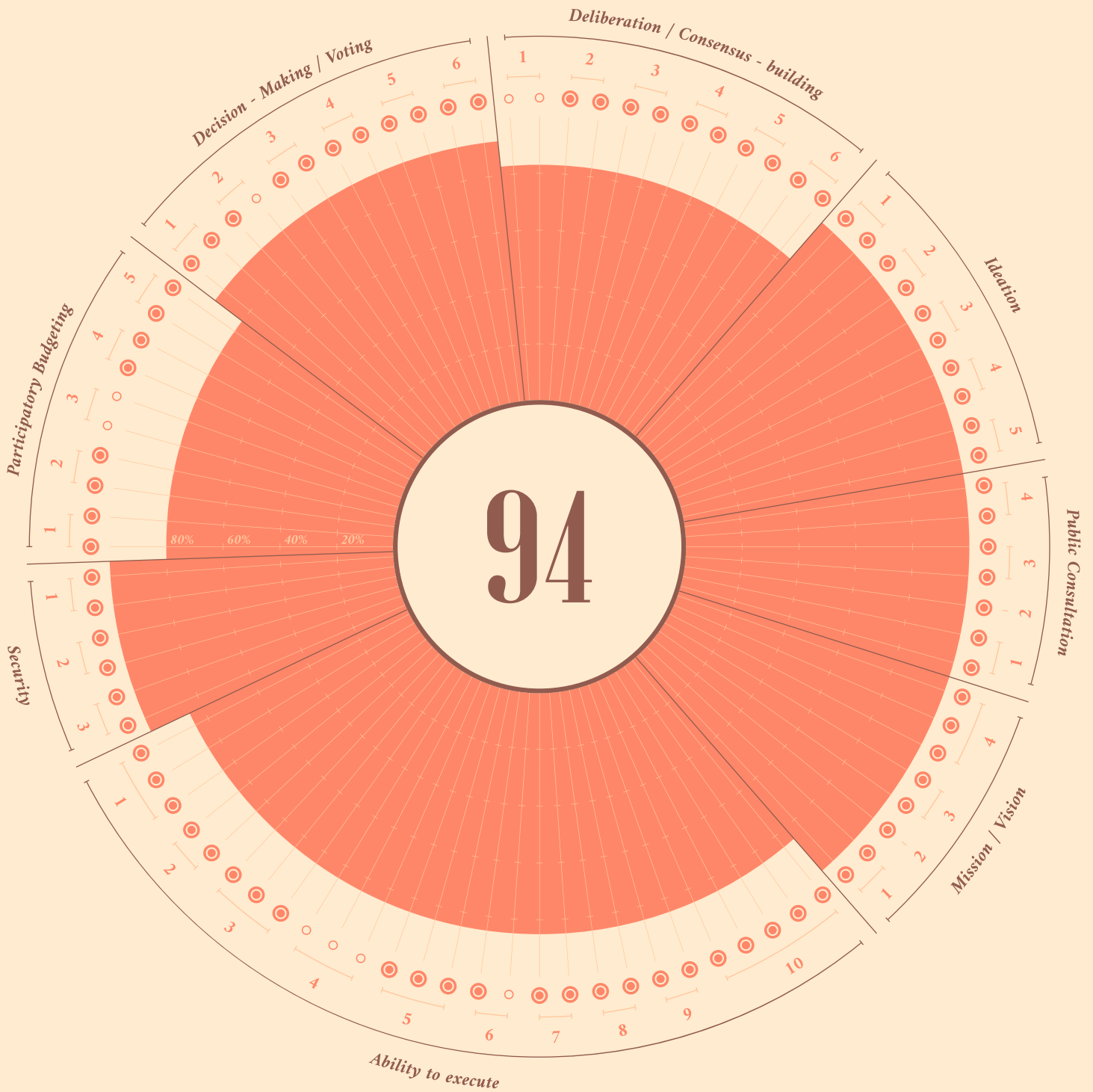
Expectation Setting — 75%

Advice & Guidance — 100%

Project Success — 100%

Customer Service — 100%

Feedback Loop — 100%

Recommendation — 100%

p. 29

v. 03

CITIZENS FOUNDATION

https://citizens.is/

Overview

Citizens Foundation was created in 2008 as a non-profit civic tech organisation to involve citizens more closely in decision-making following the 2007/2008 global financial crisis. Its open-source suite of products is now used across 45 countries with 900 projects implemented over the platform in 2023.

CITIZENS
FOUNDATION

94

Decision - Making / Voting

Deliberation / Consensus - building

Ideation

Public Consultation

Mission / Vision

Ability to execute

Security

Participatory Budgeting

80% 60% 40% 20%

NUMBER ·········· CITIZENS FOUNDATION DATA ·········· LEGEND

03

Name: Citizens Foundation
Type of organisation: Non-profit
CEO: Robert Bjarnason

Year founded:
2008

Number of Clients:
120

HQ Country:
ICELAND

Participatory Budgeting: *8/10, 80%*
Decision - Making / Voting: *11/12, 92%*
Deliberation / Consensus building: *10/12, 83%*
Ideation: *10/10, 100%*
Public Consultation: *7/7, 100%*
Mission / Vision: *8/8, 100%*
Ability to execute: *23/27, 85%*
Security: *6/6, 100%*
Bonus (Unique Selling Points): *+2*
Vendor Remit Score: *101/108, 94%*

Grading Category

1 ·········· *Question number*

Points
1) Gain ◉
2) Lose ○

*Total amount of points
shown in percentages
(%)*

80% ··········
60% ··········
40% ··········
20% ··········

100

*Vendor Remit Score
(%)*

PB **DM** **Id** **D/C** **PC**

Participatory Budgeting *Decision Making* *Idea Generation* *Deliberation & Consensus Building* *Public Consultation*
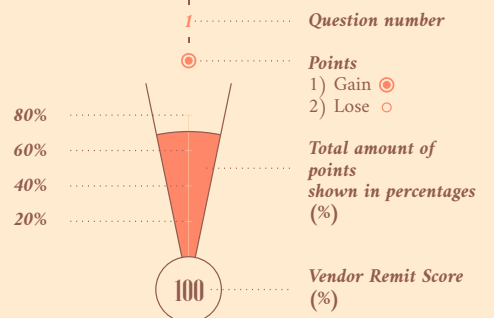
Scope of offering

Citizens Foundation's two main products, Your Priorities (Ideation, Deliberation & Public Consultation) and Open Active Voting (Participatory Budgeting) are often used in combination. In the first step, using Your Priorities, participants can add written ideas or upload videos (automatically transcribed using a Google API) supporting a certain action (e.g. upgrading a public park). They can then add comments in support or against any of the uploaded ideas, which are neatly displayed in two columns for easier analysis by participants and organisers. In addition, a sophisticated algorithm groups thematically similar comments, allowing organisers to identify common feedback patterns.

In addition to commenting, users can click to 'like' ideas. These 'likes' are then used by organisers in a second step to select some of the ideas for a subsequent Participatory Budgeting (PB) exercise conducted using the Open Active Voting module. For each idea included in the PB exercise, participants can see the estimated cost, a detailed description, and the Pros & Cons table with comments carried over from the initial ideation. Participants can add projects to their budget and a bar-chart at the top (made up of the images representing each idea) automatically adds up the selected proposals and lets users see how much budget is remaining. Once they have completed their selection, participants can add a star to one of their selected proposals which the software interprets as a double-vote for that idea.

Citizens Foundation has also recently begun to experiment with AI and gamification in building out new features for the platform.

Who should use this?

01 Organisations that frequently run public consultations.

02 Government organisations that want to increase the transparency of their budgeting process.

Ability to Execute

Citizens Foundation's open-source solutions are used by clients from Australia to Scotland, often in high-impact projects such as policy crowd-sourcing for the NHS in the UK or Participatory Budgeting in Croatia. It has also worked with the World Bank on projects in Kosovo and the Kyrgyz Republic. Citizens Foundation maintains a database of dozens of case studies and its activities in Iceland have attracted sustained media attention.

Security

Citizens Foundation uses standard SSL encryption and gives its users the choice to host the platform on a dedicated local server or on AWS data centres in either Europe or the USA. User data is protected and Citizens Foundation is fully GDPR compliant.

Standout features

- Uses open APIs to provide real-time translation, transcription of videos and for detection of abusive language, e.g. profanity

- During a PB exercise a progress bar made up of images of the selected projects clearly indicates to users how much budget is remaining

NGO / Large Donor Funding
★ ★ ★

Active Customers
★ ★ ★

Customer studies
★ ★ ★

Experience
★ ★ ★

Workforce
★ ★ ★

Sales channels
★ ★

USPs
★ ★

ISO 27001

Encryption
🔒

User data
🔒

Storage
🔒 🔒

Blockchain
N/A

Accessibility
◉ ◉ ◉

Follows WCAG or similar standard.

Mission / Vision

Citizens Foundation wants to "connect government and citizens". Its founders are concerned that some technology has "undermined our faith in debate in the public arena" and that technological innovation should be what restores it. Citizens Foundation is committed to solutions based on open-source technology, decentralisation and publicly operated servers.

Client Feedback

Citizens Foundation received overwhelmingly positive feedback from its clients in a number of areas, including for the ability to engage with citizens in a more flexible, spontaneous manner, its accurate anti-toxicity functionality, as well as the ability to quickly prioritize citizen requests. Users noted the higher levels of engagement they were able to achieve using Citizens Foundation, and that on some occasions ideas generated by citizens (and which authorities had previously been unaware of) were implemented. Suggestions for improvement centered around increasing functionality to make engagement between government administrators and citizens even more seamless. The latter, if anything, constitutes a success for Citizens Foundation in that demand for citizen engagement is beginning to even outpace the current functionality of the software.
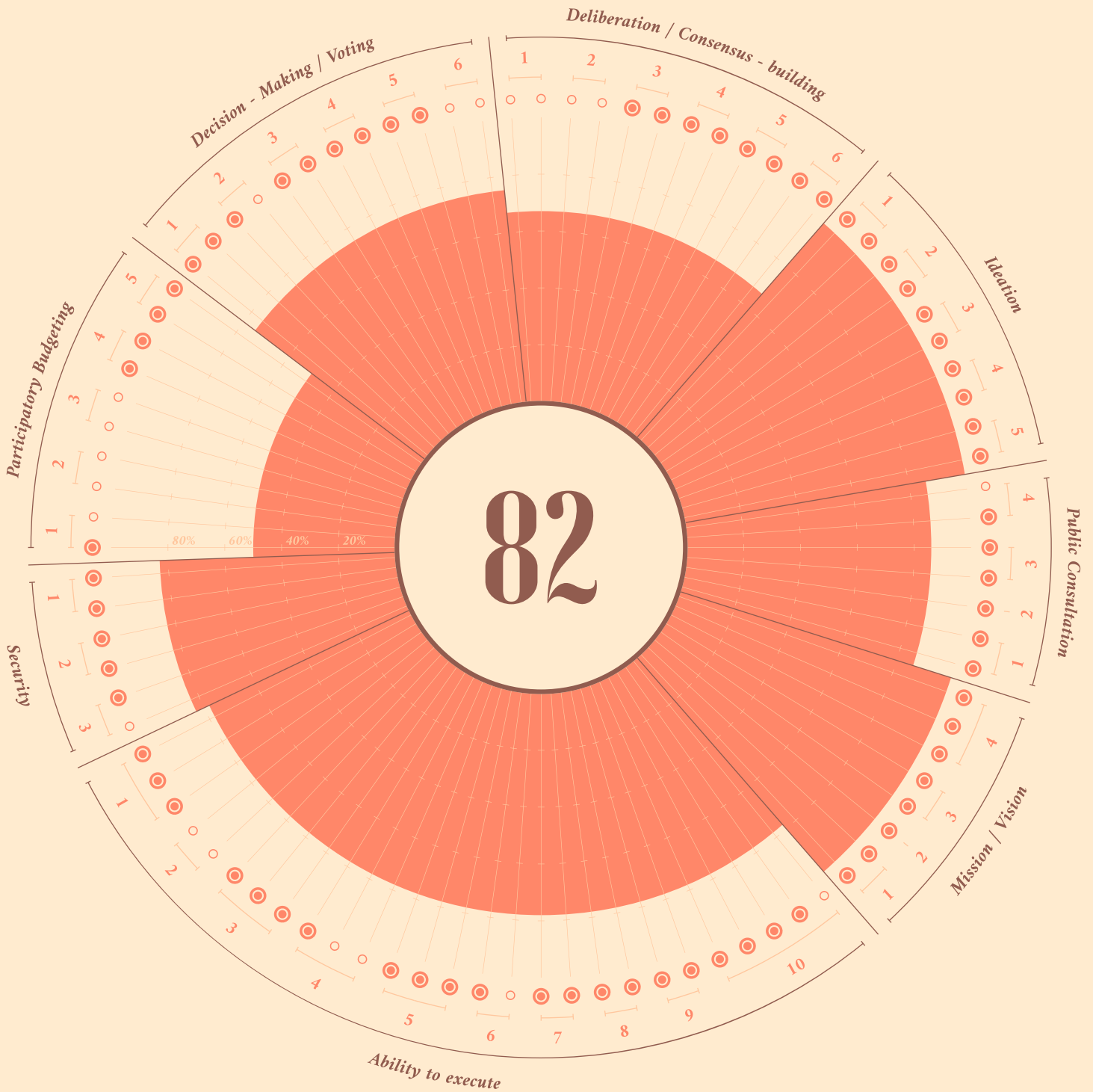
Expectation Setting — 100%

Advice & Guidance — 100%

Project Success — 100%

Customer Service — 87,5%

Feedback Loop — 100%

Recommendation — 75%

CIVOCRACY

Overview

Civocracy, headquartered in France, but also active in Belgium and Germany, provides a web-based platform for the private sector, NGOs and local governments to facilitate community engagement and stakeholder consultation.

http://www.civocracy.org

civocracy

82

Decision - Making / Voting
Deliberation / Consensus - building
Ideation
Public Consultation
Mission / Vision
Ability to execute
Security
Participatory Budgeting

80% 60% 40% 20%

NUMBER

04

CIVOCRACY DATA

Name: Civocracy
Type of organisation: Private company
CEO: Chloé Pahud

Year founded:
2015

Number of Clients:
30

HQ Country:
FRANCE

Participatory Budgeting: *5/10, 50%*
Decision - Making / Voting: *9/12, 75%*
Deliberation / Consensus building: *8/12, 67%*
Ideation: *10/10, 100%*
Public Consultation: *6/7, 86%*
Mission / Vision: *8/8, 100%*
Ability to execute: *21/27, 78%*
Security: *5/6, 83%*
Bonus (Unique Selling Points): *+1*
Vendor Remit Score: 89/108, 82%

LEGEND

Grading Category

1 ·········· *Question number*

Points
1) Gain
2) Lose

80%
60%
40%
20%

Total amount of points shown in percentages (%)

100 ·········· *Vendor Remit Score (%)*

PB	DM	Id	D/C	PC
Participatory Budgeting	*Decision Making*	*Idea Generation*	*Deliberation & Consensus Building*	*Public Consultation*
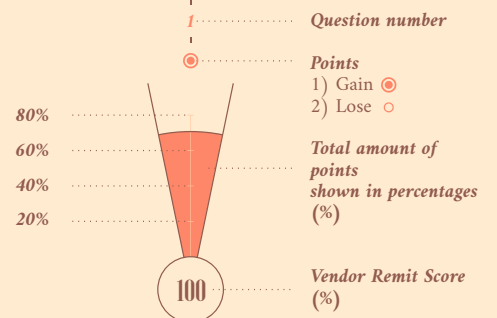
Scope of offering

Civocracy's platform consists of several modules: Discussion Forums (allows participants to comment on a matter, and to react to the comments of others); Idea-Boxes (where citizens can create and vote on proposals); and Questionnaires (participants answer pre-formulated questions - questionnaires can be used flexibly as a voting mechanism, participatory budgeting tool or survey mechanism). The Idea-Box module transfers smoothly into a Discussion once an idea achieves a certain level of support (set by the administrator).

Civocracy is structured like a social network: Organisers can upload information about their project (text, images and video), create a News page (for updates), and/or an Events page (to promote online or offline events). They can also add a Resources page and any module they choose to avail of. Civocracy encourages their clients to use different combinations of these tools to effectively reach their project goals.

Contributions can be tagged (both by organizers and participants) to allow for easier sorting. Throughout the discussion, users can see whether the organiser has read or responded to their contribution, which helps to drive accountability.

Who should use this?

01 Clients who want to streamline public consultation processes and improve responsiveness.

02 Clients who could benefit from a wraparound consultation and implementation service.

Ability to Execute

Civocracy currently employs eight workers. The organization has undergone significant internal restructuring over the past two years, pulling back to core markets and increasing its focus on corporate clients.

Security

Civocracy uses standard https encryption. The extensive privacy policy clearly states which data is public and how data is stored (on OVH's servers in France) and protected (e.g. passwords are encrypted). If a user decides to delete their account, all of their activity on the platform becomes anonymous, preserving privacy while at the same time safe-guarding the context of previous decisions.

NGO / Large Donor Funding
★ ★ ★

Active Customers
★ ★ ★

Customer studies
★ ★ ★

Experience
★ ★ ★

Workforce
★ ★ ★

Sales channels
★ ★

USPs
★

Standout feature

Full life cycle implementation and consulting services – ensuring that organisers are thoroughly trained in how to get the most out of citizen engagement.

Encryption
🔒

User data
🔒

Storage
🔒 🔒

Blockchain
N/A

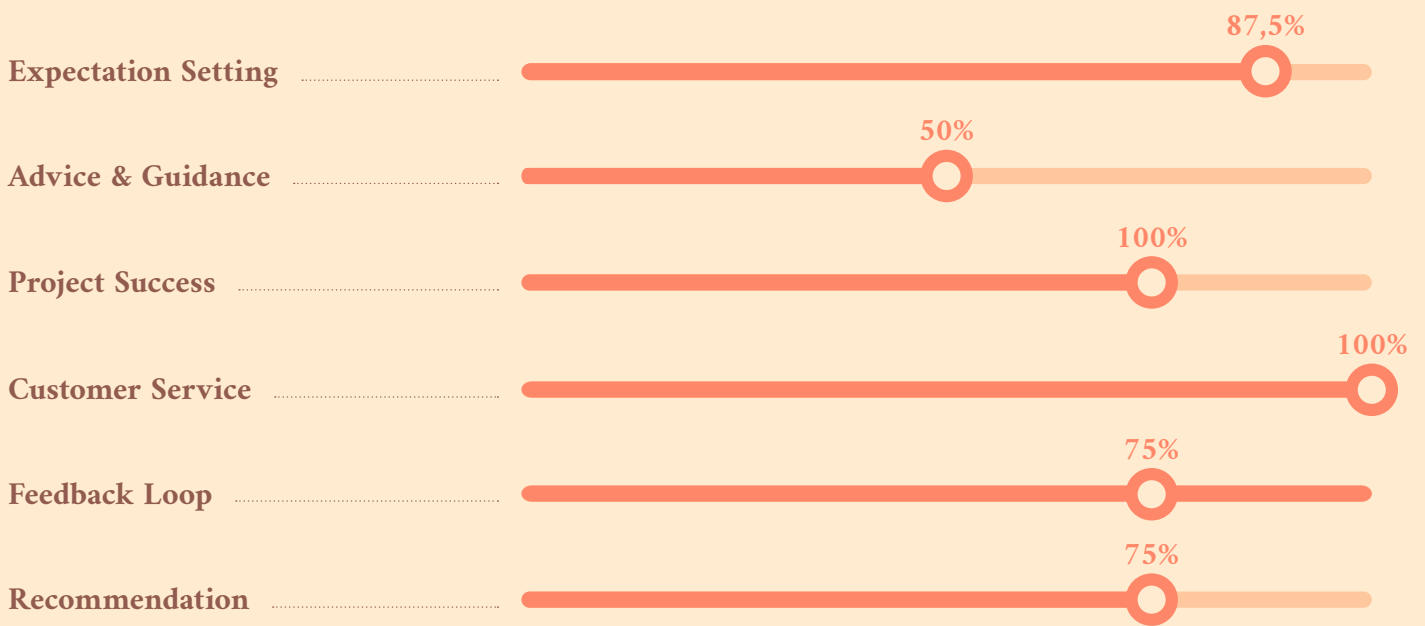**Accessibility**
◎ ◎ ◎

Follows WCAG or similar standard.

Mission / Vision

Civocracy's mission is to "work toward a future in which governments, administrations, corporates and citizens work together to address society's greatest challenges". Civocracy places a lot of emphasis on ensuring that contributions from users are followed up by including extensive consultancy as part of their services to help local decision-makers maximise citizen engagement and integrate their feedback into the process.

Client Feedback

Particular praise was given to Civocracy's ability to engage participants at every stage of the process, by sending email updates and prompts to continue their involvement, as well as for their support to organizers throughout the process. While some feedback referenced a lack of clear success KPIs, it was acknowledged that Civocracy helped to overcome this issue by mutually defining goals with the client.

Expectation Setting 87,5%

Advice & Guidance 50%

Project Success 100%

Customer Service 100%

Feedback Loop 75%

Recommendation 75%

DECIDIM

https://decidim.org/

Overview

Decidim ("We Decide" in Catalan) was created in 2016 as a digital platform for conducting participatory processes in Barcelona. Following the initial success of the platform, the Decidim Free Software Association was founded to manage the expanding Decidim community (now called MetaDecidim). The aim of the Association is to maintain Decidim's status as a digital infrastructure of the public commons. Decidim has institutional independence and is open-source and free to use.

decidim
free open-source democracy

Decision - Making / Voting

Deliberation / Consensus - building

Ideation

Public consultation

Mission / Vision

Ability to execute

Security

Participatory Budgeting

80%   60%   40%   20%

76

NUMBER

05
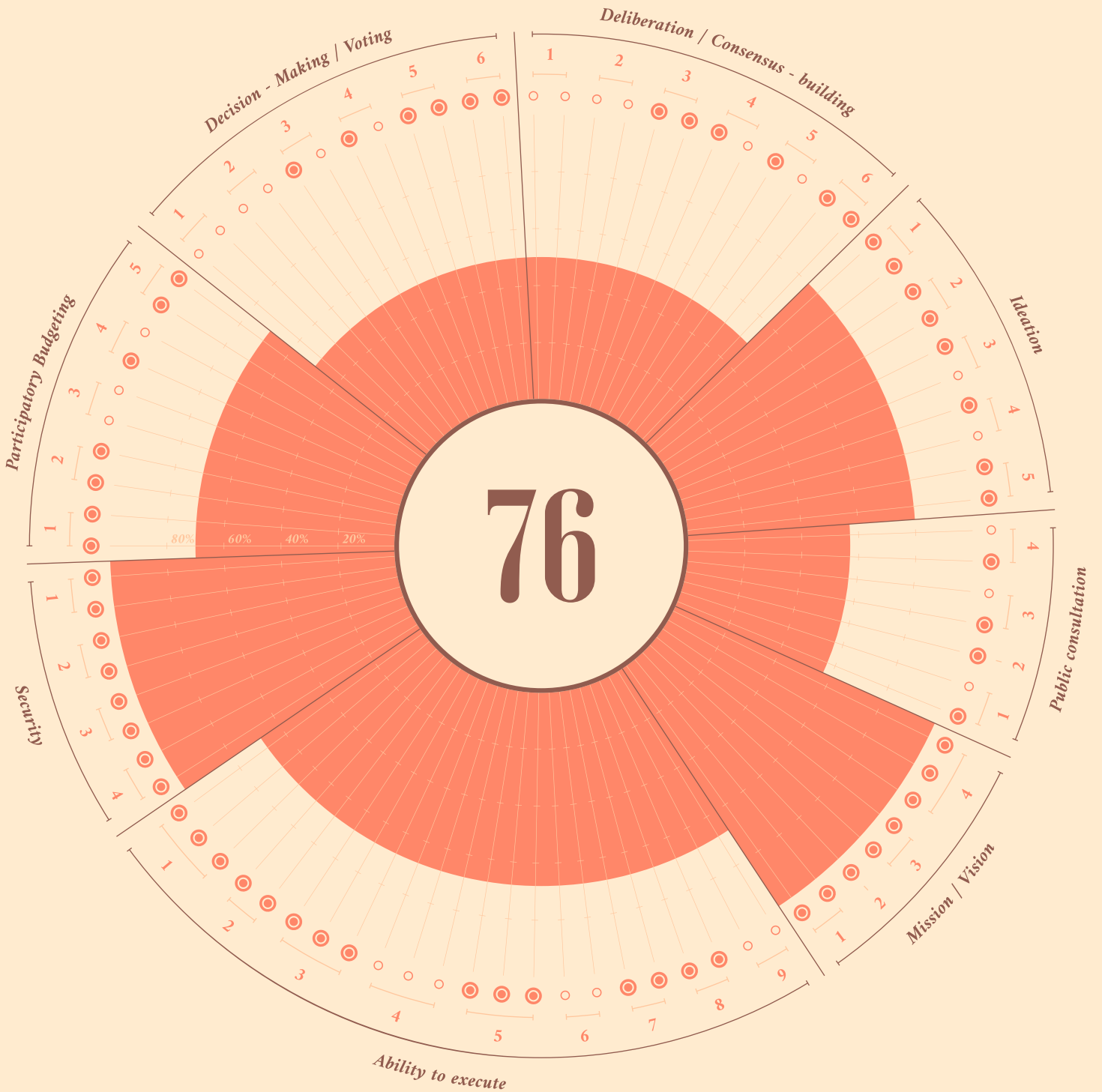
DECIDIM DATA

Name: Decidim Free Software Association
Type of organization: Non-profit
President of the Decidim Free Software Association: Nil Homedes

Year founded:
2016

Number of Clients:
390+

HQ Country:
SPAIN

Participatory Budgeting: *7/10, 70%*
Decision - Making / Voting: *6/12, 50%*
Deliberation / Consensus building: *6/12, 50%*
Ideation: *8/10, 80%*
Public Consultation: *4/7, 57%*
Mission / Vision: *8/8, 100%*
Ability to execute: *15/22, 68%*
Security: *8/8, 100%*
Bonus (Unique Selling Points): *+2*
Vendor Remit Score: 80/105, 76%

LEGEND

Grading Category

1 ·········· *Question number*

Points
1) Gain ◉
2) Lose ○

80%
60%
40%
20%

Total amount of points shown in percentages (%)

100 ·········· *Vendor Remit Score (%)*

PB	DM	Id	D/C	PC
Participatory Budgeting	*Decision Making*	*Idea Generation*	*Deliberation & Consensus Building*	*Public Consultation*
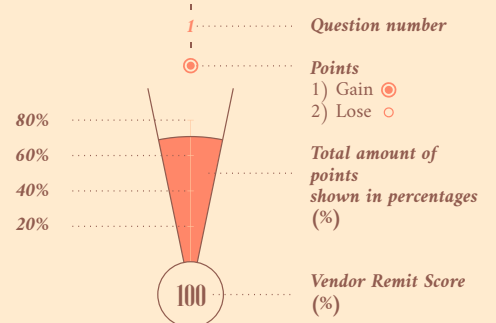
Scope of offering

Decidim is a digital participation platform that has two types of elements: Participatory Spaces and Participatory Components. While Participatory Spaces are general forms of participation, Participatory Components refer to interaction mechanisms among end users within those spaces. Participatory Spaces include Initiatives, Assemblies, Processes (e.g. a structured process such as Participatory Budgeting), and Consultations. Participatory Components include Proposals, Amendments, Debates, Blogs, Voting, Meetings, etc. Decidim's modular nature allows clients to flexibly combine participatory components within a space depending on the needs of the project. This can also include incorporating elements of offline participation (e.g. organizing offline meetings) into the process. Of special interest here is the Accountability module, which allows end-users to track the implementation of democratic decisions.

Using Decidim requires installation of the Core module – all other modules (functional parts of the platform) are optional. The MetaDecidim community maintains and creates new modules, e.g. for analytics, budgeting or calendar integration. In addition, the Decidim community has developed the "DocsDecidim" website which instructs clients on how to implement Decidim's digital infrastructure. As a result, Decidim is highly versatile in terms of implementation, but does require some technical know-how on the part of the client (Decidim does offer a Support Forum).

Due to its modular flexibility, the experience for the end user varies depending on the participation options selected by clients. In some cases, users might be invited to submit initiatives and to vote on them, in others, they may comment on proposals. While its modular adaptability allows almost limitless possibilities, this means that the burden for deciding how participation is structured is shifted to the client, who thus must have a strong vision of what they are seeking to achieve in terms of end-user participation.

Who should use this?

01 Local governments that want to enable increased political engagement.

02 Organizations that prioritize an open-source, decentralized provider over commercial options.

Ability to Execute

Since 2016, Decidim has been used in more than 390 instances in over 30 countries. Along with the most well-known instance, Decidim Barcelona, significant projects include the European Commission's platform for The Conference on the Future of Europe, the City of Kakogawa in Japan, and participatory budgeting for the city of Helsinki, Finland.

The organizational structure of Decidim reflects its ethos as an open-source project: While the MetaDecidim community (where everyone can contribute to improving the software) has several Working Groups that are involved in specific projects, only members of the non-profit Decidim Free Software Association can participate in governance discussions.

Unlike many other vendors, Decidim does not have full-time employees in a traditional sense. Instead, people can become members of the Decidim community via payment of an annual membership fee and a willingness to participate in the community. Nonetheless, Decidim remains heavily reliant on public funding (with direct subsidies accounting for over 70% of its revenue).

Security

Due to Decidim's decentralized open-source nature, much of the responsibility for security measures lies with the client. In particular, clients are responsible for hosting the software on their own servers or an outsourced server of their choice.

Decidim does offer a large array of possibilities for facilitating end-user authentication, including IdCat mòbil, Suomi.fi, Central Authentication Service (CAS), and OmniAuth.

Decidim is currently finalizing blockchain integration with Vocdoni's protocol (a blockchain voting app). The beta version has been successfully tested and this feature is expected to become available in 2024.

NGO / Large Donor Funding
★ ★ ★

Active Customers
★ ★ ★

Customer studies
★ ★ ★

Experience
★ ★ ★

Workforce
★ ★ ★

Sales channels
★ ★

USPs
★ ★

Encryption
🔒

User data
🔒

Storage
🔒 🔒

Blockchain
🔒 🔒

Accessibility
◎ ◎ ◎

Follows WCAG or similar standard.

Mission / Vision

The Decidim Free Software Association's goal is to enhance democratic processes with advanced digital infrastructure, or as they put it, to "contribute to the democratization of society through the construction of technology, methodologies, practices, standards, actions narratives, and values, in a free, open, collaborative and reflective way".
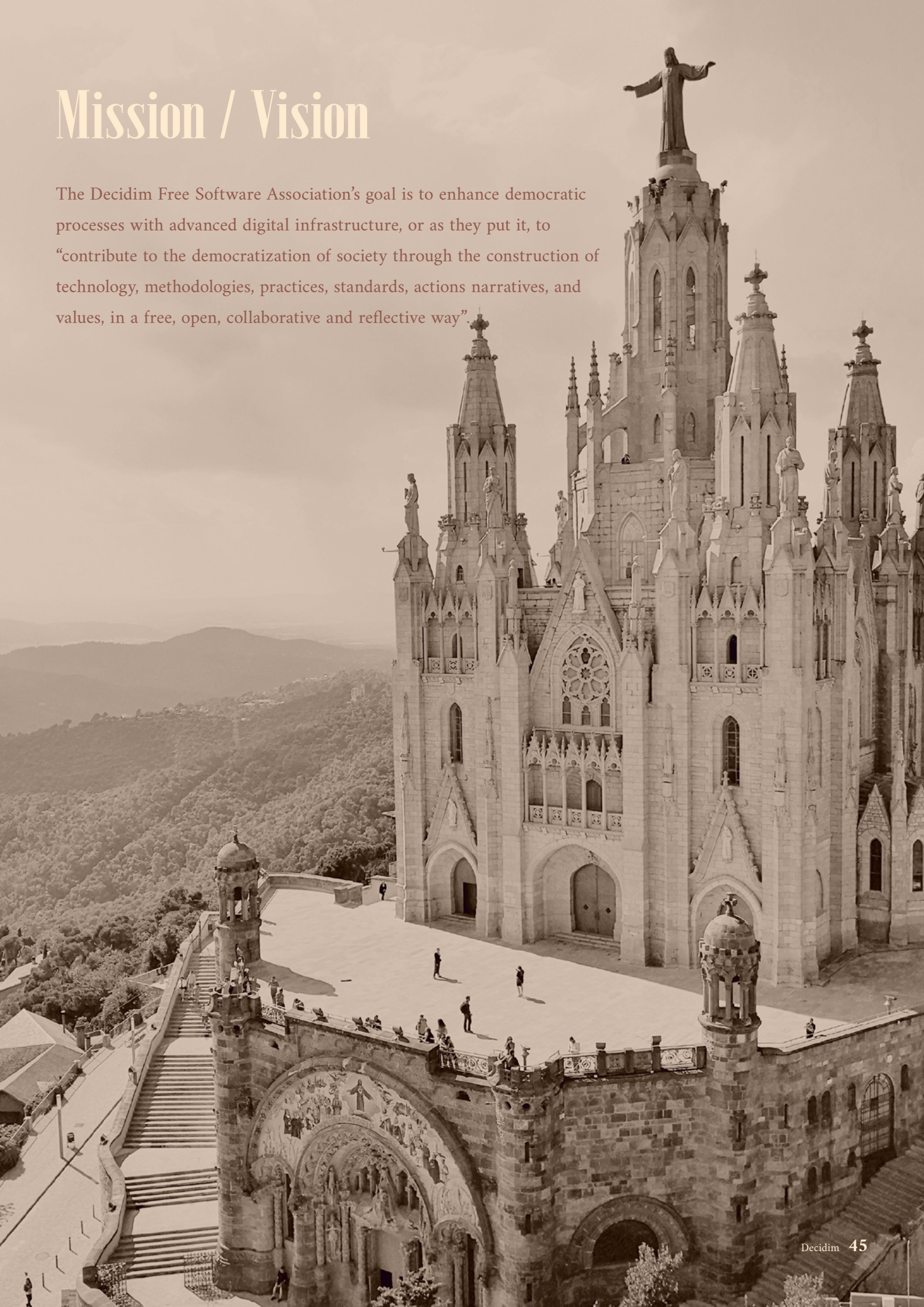
Standout features

Modular adaptability: Clients can use the different participation components to build an environment that meets their needs.

Accountability: Includes a component that allows end users to track project implementation. The project is divided into multiple steps and each stage of completion is visually shown as a percentage of the total project.

Commitment to a completely decentralized end-to-end decision-making process: With its organizational structure and open-source approach to digital decision-making, Decidim can allow for an uncompromised version of bottom-up democracy to be established.

DELIB

Overview

Delib is one of the pioneers of digital democracy, working with BT and Accenture as early as 2002 to run online voting pilots for British local elections.

Formally incorporated since 2004, Delib has built a host of online decision-making and deliberation apps, some of which were famously used by the Obama campaign in 2018 to crowdsource policy ideas. Since 2012, Delib has focussed on three core product offerings: Citizen Space, an online consultation platform; Simulator, a policy simulation tool which supports, inter alia, Participatory Budgeting; and Dialogue, a citizen engagement platform.

Delib

Deliberation / Consensus - building

Decision - Making / Voting

Ideation

Participatory Budgeting

Public Consultation

75

80% 60% 40% 20%

Security

Mission / Vision

Ability to execute

NUMBER

06
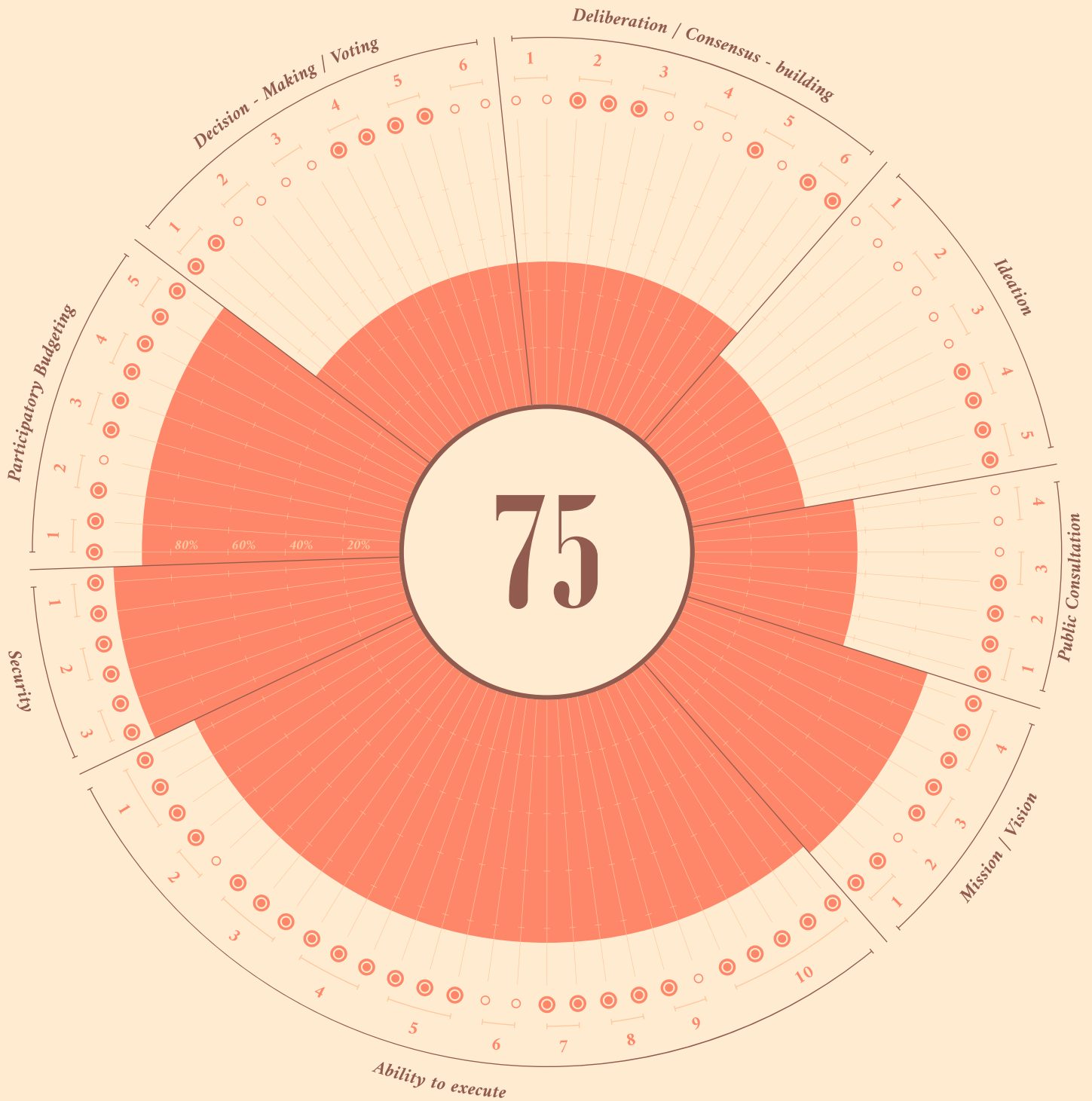
DELIB DATA

Name: Delib
Type of organisation: Private company
CEO: Andy Parkhouse

Year founded:
2004

Number of Clients:
200

HQ Country:
UK

Participatory Budgeting: *9/10, 90%*
Decision - Making / Voting: *6/12, 50%*
Deliberation / Consensus building: *6/12, 50%*
Ideation: *4/10, 40%*
Public Consultation: *4/7, 57%*
Mission / Vision: *7/8, 88%*
Ability to execute: *23/27, 85%*
Security: *6/6, 100%*
Bonus (Unique Selling Points): *+2*
Vendor Remit Score: 81/108, 75%

LEGEND

Grading Category

1 .... *Question number*

Points
1) Gain ◉
2) Lose ○

80%
60%
40%
20%

Total amount of points shown in percentages (%)

100 .... *Vendor Remit Score (%)*

PB	DM	Id	D/C	PC
Participatory Budgeting	*Decision Making*	*Idea Generation*	*Deliberation & Consensus Building*	*Public Consultation*
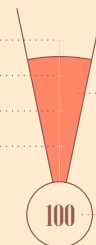
Scope of offering

Delib's main offering, Citizen Space, is an end-to-end consultation portal, complete with landing page (to integrate into a client's existing web presence), surveys and a host of question options (including ranked choice, multiple choice and free text answers). More lengthy consultations can be broken into chapters. The platform automatically updates the landing page when a consultation has ended, allowing participants to read about the outcome.

Dialogue, Delib's second solution, is set up as an ideation and crowdsourcing platform, allowing participants to share comments with one another, something not possible within Citizen Space where comments and answers are only visible to the administrator.

Though strictly a Deliberative rather than Participatory Budgeting solution (all budget options are set by the admin rather than permitting ideation from the participants), Delib's third product, Simulator, is highly sophisticated, calculating remaining budget in real-time as the participant selects options. Prior to a budgeting exercise, clients can configure the platform to display the real-life consequences of budget choices (e.g. if library funding is cut by 10%, 3 libraries will close).

Since 2021, Delib also offers a geo-spatial add-on which integrates with all other solutions. Clients can use the tool to embed existing mapping data (e.g. Ordnance Survey data in the UK and Ireland), perform path-analysis (where residents can share what path they are using to travel between two points on a map) and even allow users to draw their own maps. Map data can then be used to tie survey or engagement data to specific geographic areas. Intended application areas of the geo-spatial module include traffic management, cycle path design, walking trails and even noise data management.

Who should use this?

01	Organisations that frequently run public consultations.
02	Government organisations that want to increase the transparency of their budgeting process.

Ability to Execute

With close to 200 active client sites (in most cases a city or county council, but also including larger sites like the Scottish Government and Northern Ireland), Delib has a substantial customer base.

Delib's focus on public sector compliance (ISO 27001, BPSS clearance, etc.) and continuous innovation (such as the new geo-spatial add-on) have kept the organisation at the forefront of online participation and public consultation.

Security

Delib uses standard security measures such as https encryption. User data can be held on dedicated virtual machines in a country of the client's choice, and internal procedures prevent even Delib employees based in other countries from accessing client data.

Delib holds an ISO 27001:2013 certification (Information Security Management), trains its employees on security on an ongoing basis and performs regular penetration tests to help secure its systems.

Standout features

- Integration of geo-spatial data points with survey and engagement information
- Architecture of platform follows privacy-by-design principles
- Proven compliance with a wide range of public sector certifications

NGO / Large Donor Funding
★ ★ ★

Active Customers
★ ★ ★

Customer studies
★ ★ ★

Experience
★ ★ ★

Workforce
★ ★ ★

Sales channels
★ ★

USPs
★ ★

ISO 27001

Encryption
🔒

User data
🔒

Storage
🔒 🔒

Blockchain
N/A

Accessibility
◉ ◉ ◉

Follows WCAG or similar standard.

Mission / Vision

Delib's vision is "to encourage systemic shifts towards more open, efficient and accountable democratic processes by lowering barriers to entry for all parties." To achieve this, Delib strives to simplify the democratic decision-making process for citizens and public officials alike. Delib believes that depth of engagement – having a few core functions that people use extensively – is more important than breadth of functionality – having lots of bells and whistles that never achieve widespread usage. To encourage adoption by more and more departments over time, Delib charges by site (e.g. a whole county council) rather than by user.

Client Feedback

Delib received full scores in all feedback areas with particularly strong feedback around the vendor's ongoing project support and their deep understanding of local government requirements. The administration of the portal was described as 'super easy' without the need for administrators to be digitally savvy. The geo-tagging functionality was also praised as innovative.

One constructive suggestion was to condense some of the survey elements into fewer pages in the desktop version of the platform.

Expectation Setting — **100%**

Advice & Guidance — **100%**

Project Success — **100%**

Customer Service — **100%**

Feedback Loop — **100%**

Recommendation — **100%**

p. 53

v. 07

DISCUTO

http://www.discuto.io
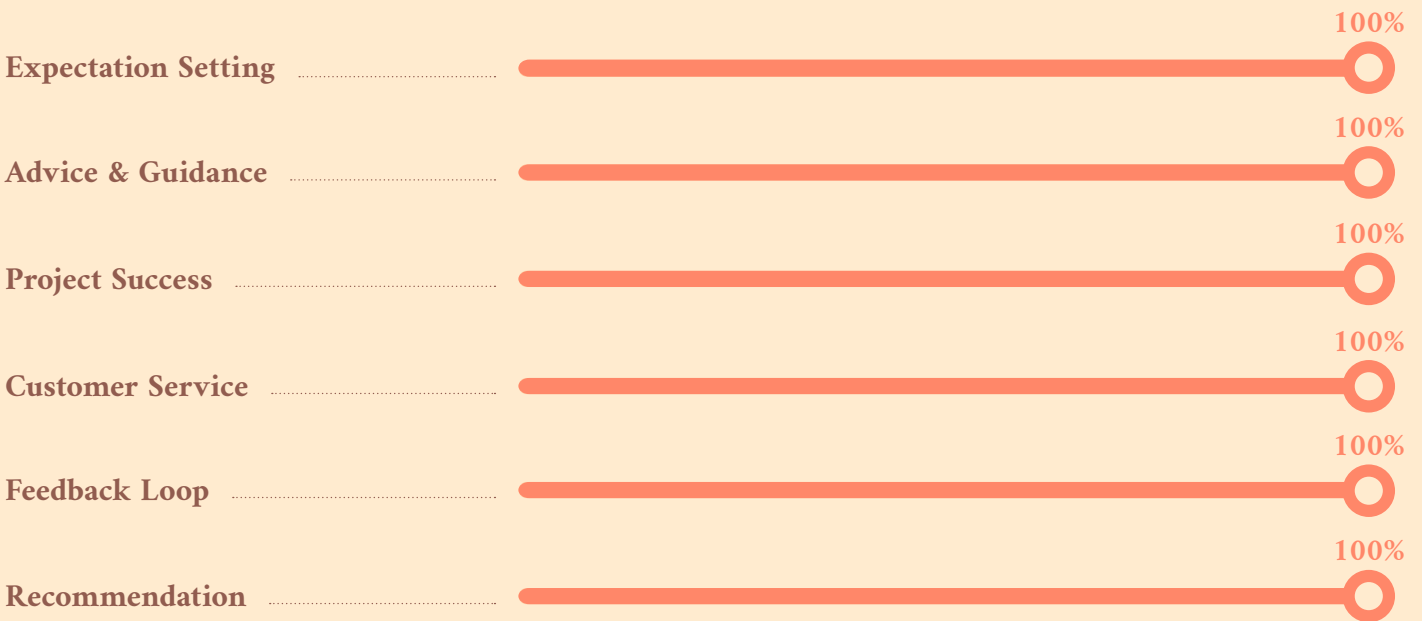
Overview

Discuto utilises a policy-centric decision-making process that allows participants to create and co-design policy documents. This is particularly facilitated via a system of up/down voting on aspects or sections of a document. The Austrian company has a diverse list of clients, including the Austrian Society for Environment and Technology (ÖGUT), the German Bundestag and SK Rapid Wien.

Discuto

Deliberation | Consensus - building

Ideation

Public Consultation

Mission / Vision

Ability to execute

Security

Decision - Making / Voting

80% 60% 40% 20%

81
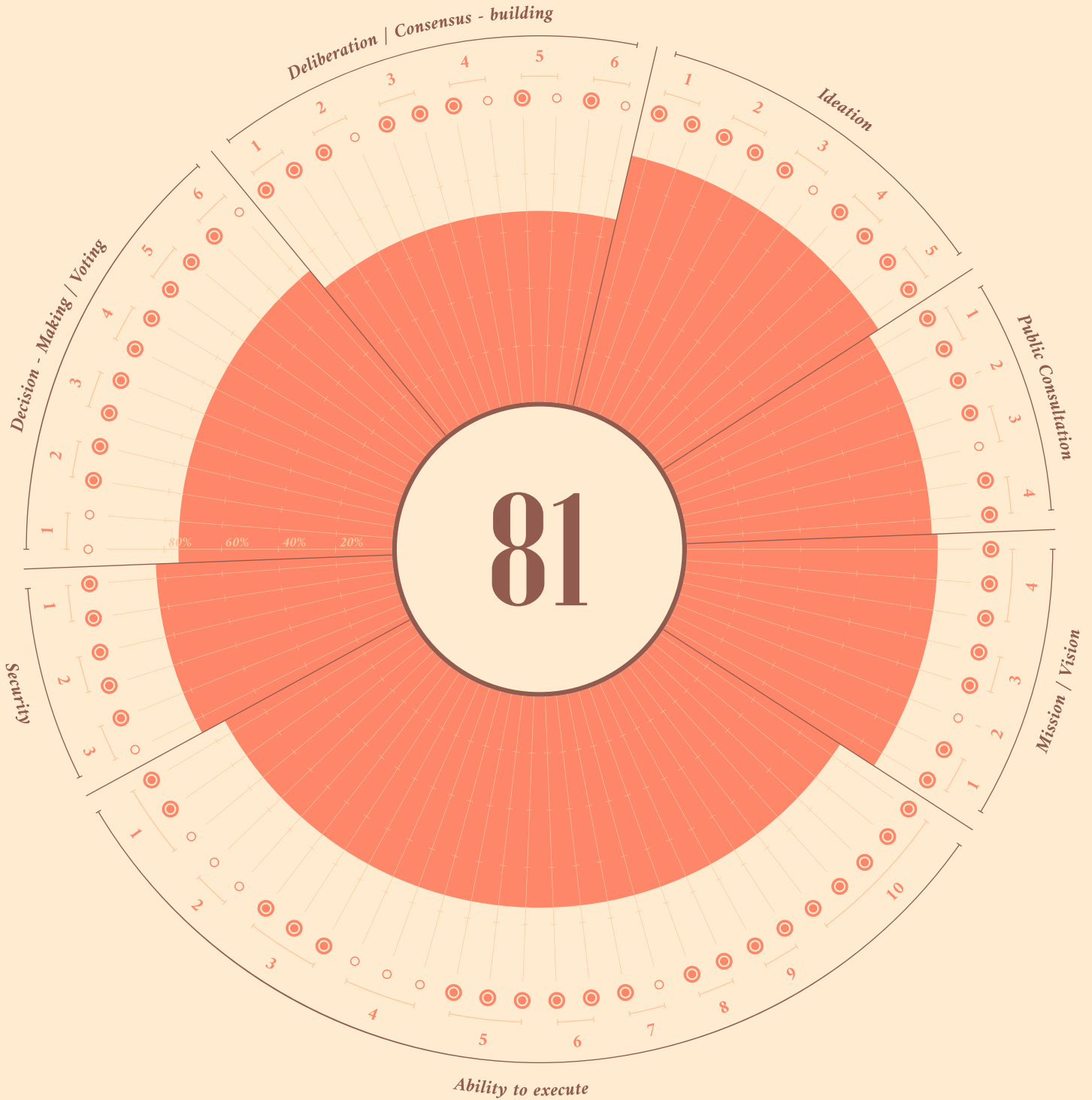
NUMBER ········· **DISCUTO DATA** ··················· **LEGEND**

07

Name: Discuto
Type of organisation: Private company
CEO: Hannes Leo

Year founded:
2013

Number of Clients:
20,000 USERS

HQ Country:
AUSTRIA

Participatory Budgeting: *9/12, 75%*
Decision - Making / Voting: *8/12, 67%*
Ideation: *9/10, 90%*
Public Consultation: *6/7, 86%*
Mission / Vision: *7/8, 88%*
Ability to execute: *20/27, 74%*
Security: *5/6, 83%*
Bonus (Unique Selling Points): *+1*
Vendor Remit Score: 79/98, 81%

Grading Category

1 ·········· *Question number*

Points
1) Gain ◉
2) Lose ○

80% ··········
60% ··········
40% ··········
20% ··········

Total amount of
points
shown in percentages
(%)

100 ·········· *Vendor Remit Score*
(%)

PB
Participatory Budgeting

DM
Decision Making

Id
Idea Generation

D/C
Deliberation & Consensus Building

PC
Public Consultation
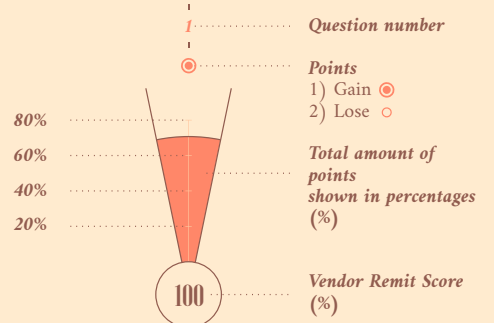
Scope of offering

The Discuto Ideation & Discussion platform allows users to co-create and co-discuss ideas, whether on the basis of an existing document or from scratch. Uploaded documents such as MS word files are automatically split into paragraphs with each paragraph becoming a discussion where users can suggest changes, add new content or comment and upvote/downvote others' content and comments.

Alternatively, users can start an ideation process from scratch and then allow other users to comment and vote on their ideas. In both cases, a gamification badge system encourages users to interact with the process and contribute their ideas. During and following the discussion process, organisers get a breakdown of popular comments, particularly divisive paragraphs or those attracting consensus, as well as engagement levels. Polls can be set up while a discussion is ongoing to resolve challenging areas by getting more users to chime in. Administrators can also use the system to send nudge emails to users to increase participation.

Who should use this?

01 Clients needing to create an end-to-end process, from ideation to decision.

02 Projects that involve a highly technical discussion where the devil is in the detail.

Ability to Execute

Discuto's small team belies a wealth of experience in both academia and business which doubtlessly helped in securing their already impressive customer list.

Discuto has had very little activity in the media, but has been able to be quite successful without it. In doing so, it has been able to differentiate itself from widely available collaboration tools (such as GSuite) which lack some of Discuto's functionality.

Security

All of Discuto's data is stored on German servers (hetzner.com) and Discuto maintains a detailed privacy policy outlining the security and backup arrangements with their hosting provider, as well as the rights of users to request deletion of their data. All stored data is encrypted, and communication with the server uses https encryption.

Standout features

- Can adjust to provide the right tool for the right phase in the co-designing process: Ideation to start the process, Discussion to interactively co-create a document, and Polling to resolve divisive points or impasses in the process.
- Allows for granular and detailed collaboration on policy documents by splitting documents into paragraphs for discussion and decision.

NGO / Large
Donor Funding
★ ★ ★

Active Customers
★ ★ ☆

Customer studies
★ ★ ★

Experience
★ ★ ★

Workforce
☆ ★ ☆

Sales channels
★ ★

USPs
★

ISO 27001

Encryption
🔒

User data
🔒

Storage
🔒 🔒

Blockchain
N/A

Accessibility
◉ ◉ ◉

Considered as part of software design.

Mission / Vision

Discuto's mission is to "facilitate crowd-based deliberations that help to insource knowledge for better and more inclusive decisions."

Discuto aims to make collaboration more manageable by breaking down policy documents into small, individual discussions. In addition, by analysing votes and comments on all sections of a draft, Discuto wants to focus collaboration on divisive or complex aspects of a document while accelerating sign-off on sections with strong consensus levels.
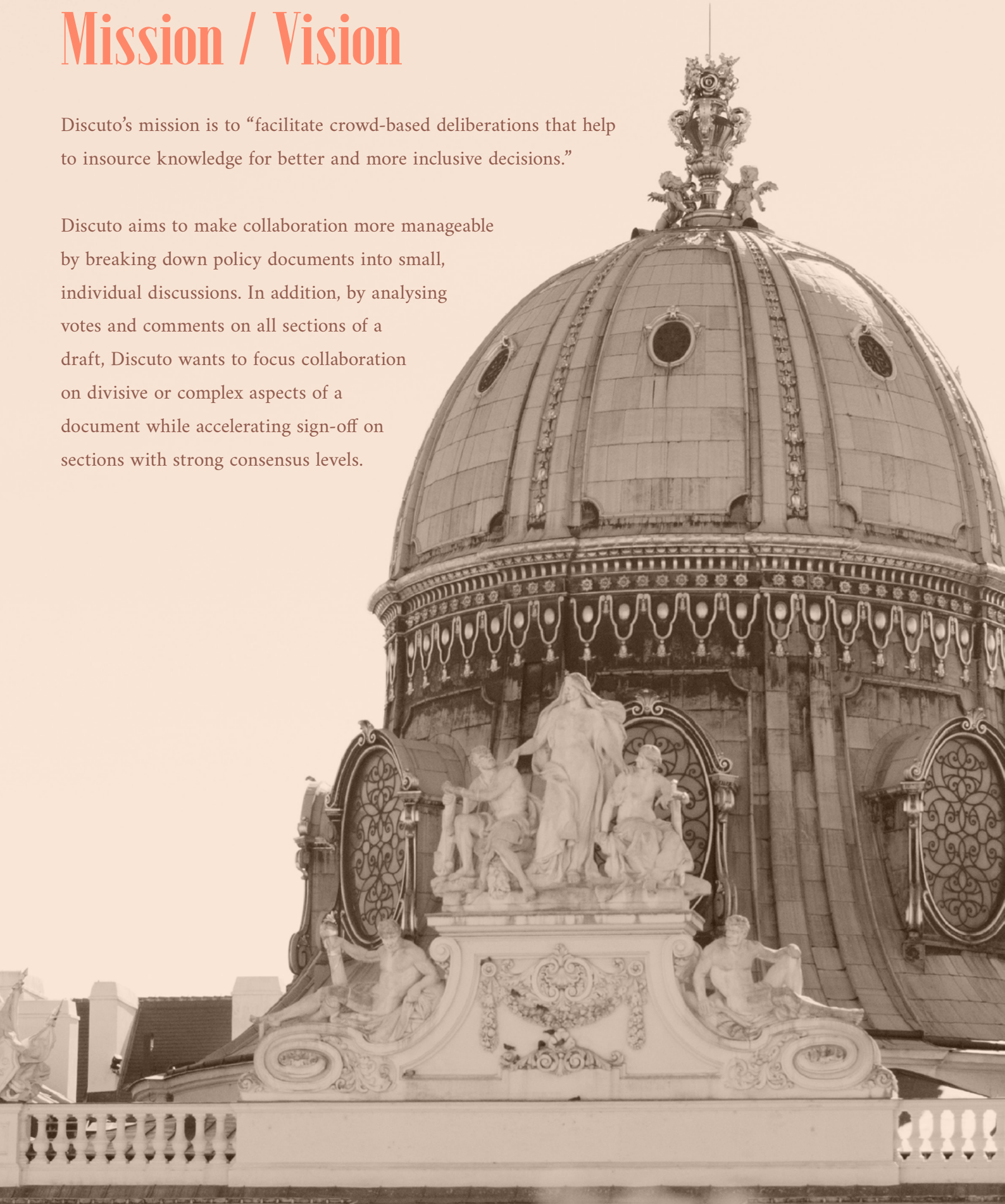
Client Feedback

Discuto received positive feedback throughout every stage of the customer journey. Particular praise was given to Discuto's paragraph commenting feature which was reported as extremely useful for organizing a structured discussion on unformatted documents. The platform was described as easy to use and very intuitive for non-technically-minded people. Some feedback referenced technical issues; however, Discuto's responsive and reliable team excels in customer support, managing to resolve these issues quickly in all instances.

Expectation Setting — 83%

Advice & Guidance — 67%

Project Success — 100%

Customer Service — 100%

Feedback Loop — 100%

Recommendation — 67%

ETHELO

https://ethelo.com/
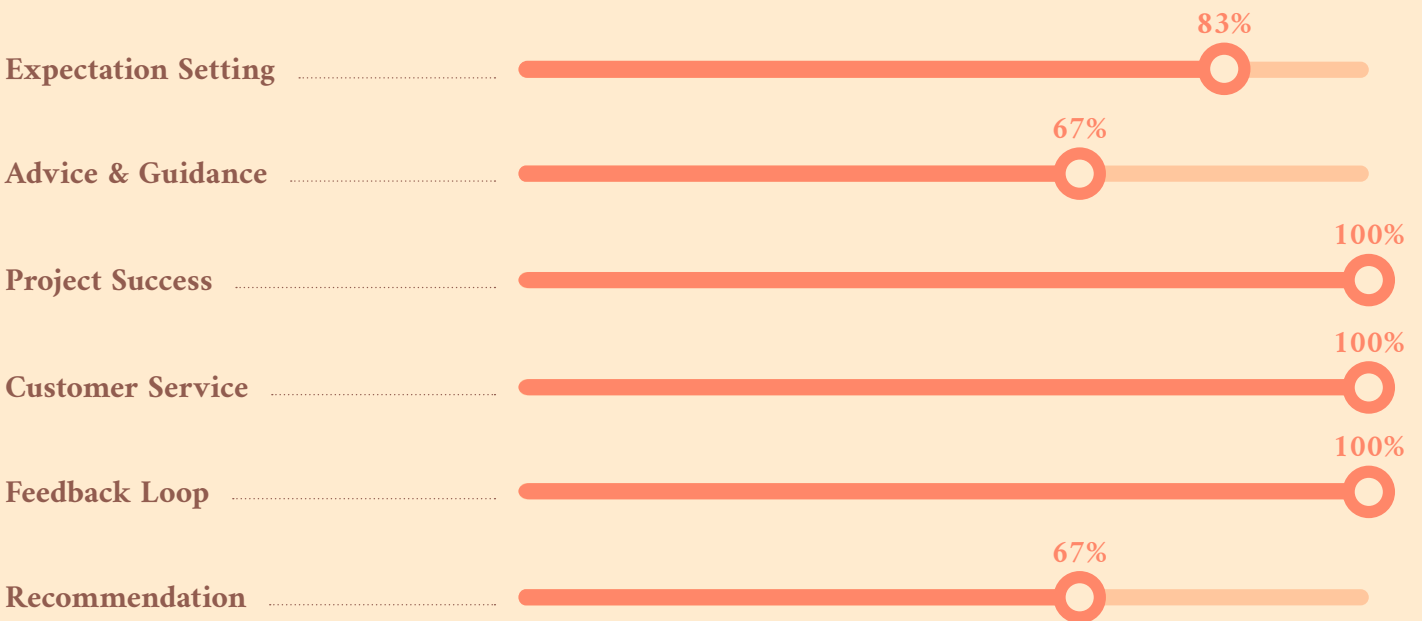
Overview

Ethelo was founded in 2011 by Canadian mathematician John Richardson to facilitate complex decision-making processes that contain multiple, potentially interdependent, questions. By quickly calculating the potential vote combinations, Ethelo can provide organisers with recommendations on which outcomes attract the most support, are most or least divisive, or fulfil other criteria (e.g. remain within a certain budget for a participatory budgeting exercise).

The technology was originally used during a referendum in the Canadian province of British Columbia and has since evolved to provide a complex decision engine to both public and private organisations.

ETHELO

91

Decision - Making / Voting

Deliberation / Consensus - building

Public Consultation

Mission / Vision

Ability to execute

Security

Participatory Budgeting

80% 60% 40% 20%

NUMBER

08
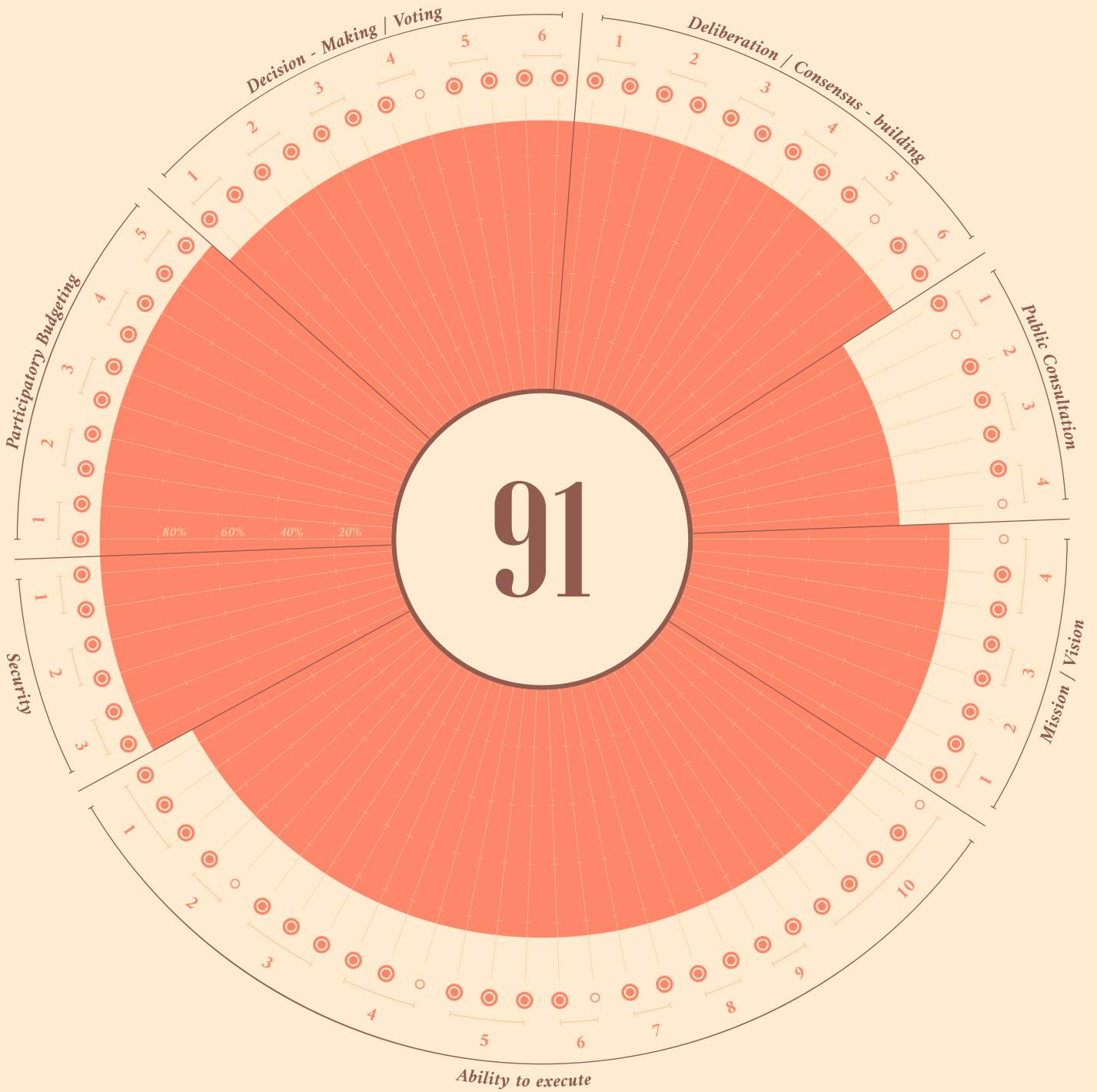
ETHELO DATA

Name: Ethelo
Type of organisation: Private company, a non-profit, and a charitable foundation
CEO: John Richardson

Year founded:
2011

Number of Clients:
45

HQ Country:
CANADA

Participatory Budgeting: *3/10, 30%*
Decision - Making / Voting: *7/12, 58%*
Ideation: *8/10, 80%*
Public Consultation: *4/7, 57%*
Mission / Vision: *8/8, 100%*
Ability to execute: *21/27, 78%*
Security: *4/6, 67%*
Bonus (Unique Selling Points): *+2*
Vendor Remit Score: *72/96, 75%*

LEGEND

Grading Category

1 .... *Question number*

.... **Points**
1) Gain ◉
2) Lose ○

80%
60%
40%
20%

**Total amount of points
shown in percentages
(%)**

100 .... *Vendor Remit Score
(%)*

PB — *Participatory Budgeting* **DM** — *Decision Making* **Id** — *Idea Generation* **D/C** — *Deliberation & Consensus Building* **PC** — *Public Consultation*
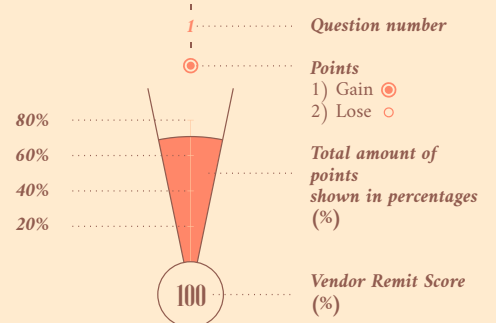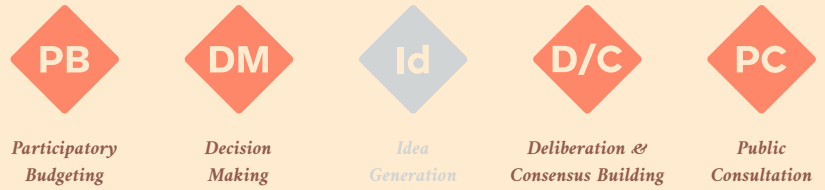
Scope of offering

Ethelo offers a decision platform that clients can utilise to allow participants to vote on options which the Ethelo algorithm will combine into all the possible scenarios based on rules and constraints. Users vote on several options at a time and have the ability to weight their answers (e.g. a user may decide to give more weight to their answers on environmental aspects of a decision at the expense of economic aspects or vice versa).

Ethelo then ranks these various scenarios by decision strength and consensus score.

As a consequence, Ethelo is particularly strong in informing organisations as to the most 'fair' outcome of a combined vote, i.e. those scenarios that attract a high level of consensus. Users can add comments and links to external resources, adding a deliberative aspect to the decision-making process.

Since the acquisition of Citizen Budget in 2019, Ethelo has combined Participatory Budgeting functionality with its key strength of constraints computation, allowing it to offer innovative solutions such as carbon budgets that can account for multiple constraints (e.g. greenhouse gas targets, monetary budget, and a job creation target). An optional auto-balance tool helps guide the participant towards a balanced budget based on how important different policy areas are to the participant. Finally, Ethelo has brought its expertise in scenario analysis to its PB module as well, allowing clients to choose from budget distribution scenarios based on the level of consensus each of those scenarios attains (i.e. rather than picking individual projects or elements of a budget, the scenario-builder identifies the overarching consolidated budget scenarios that enjoy the most consensus overall, building each element into a cohesive whole and avoiding 'design by committee' pitfalls).

Who should use this?

01 Anyone who is serious about giving communities a transparent stake in decision-making.

02 Those with complex, multi-factor decisions to resolve.

Ability to Execute

With over 150 customer implementations, Ethelo is well established. Detailed client testimonials and impact evaluations of past projects speak to the traction of this product. Ethelo also maintains a not-for-profit arm, providing its licenses free of charge to community groups. With more than 11 years of experience in the market, positive customer feedback, as well as its recent acquisition of Citizen Budget and foray into organisational decision-making for DAOs, Ethelo continues to expand.

In 2023, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) recognized Ethelo as a "Digital X" solution. The platform will be made available to more than 150 countries under a UN Long Term Agreement.

Security

Ethelo offers multi-factor authentication options for sensitive accounts. Clients have a choice between using AWS Cloud Storage, Google Cloud Hosting or a dedicated server in either Canada or the US. While Ethelo does not use Blockchain as part of its security architecture, the company has started to use Smart Contracts as part of its DAO solution.

Standout features

- Fully transparent outcome scenarios for even the most complex decisions.
- Allows users to weight their votes, making each outcome scenario more accurate in terms of voter preference.

NGO / Large Donor Funding
★ ★ ☆

Active Customers
★ ★ ★

Customer studies
★ ★ ★

Experience
★ ★ ★

Workforce
★ ★ ☆

Sales channels
★ ☆

USPs
★ ★

Encryption
🔒

User data
🔒

Storage
🔒 🔒

Blockchain
N/A

Accessibility
◎ ◎ ◎

Follows WCAG or similar standard.

Mission / Vision

Ethelo wants "to empower people to solve society's hardest problems using eDemocracy technology." At the core of its philosophy is "the importance of fairness in the distribution of satisfaction as a precondition for strong social contracts." While this may sound like a lofty goal, it does have a basis in the concept of "inequity aversion", or as Ethelo defines it, the concept that "people will (a) reject unfair outcomes even when they would otherwise benefit, and (b) support personally unsatisfactory outcomes because they perceive the process to have been fair."

Ethelo sees this as an antidote to divisive and partisan electoral politics and believes that its software can help both public and private clients uncover areas of consensus (or at least less division) and ultimately make 'fairer' decisions.
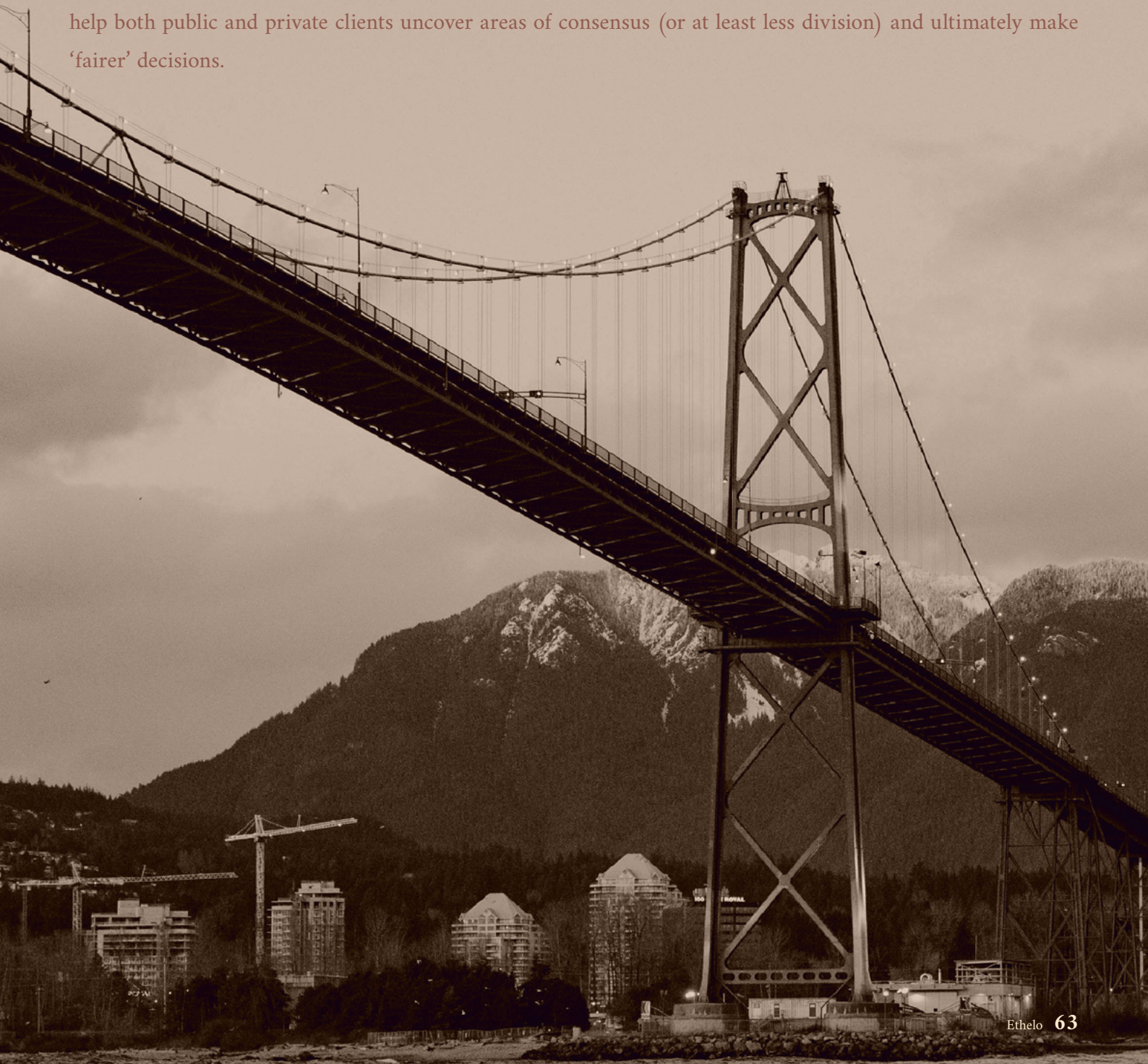
Client Feedback

We received positive feedback from Ethelo's clients with particular praise given to Ethelo's focus on driving diverse engagement and the ability of its PB solution to represent the budget in terms of the user's personal taxes. While customer service was seen as excellent, areas of improvement include better reporting as well as helping clients develop effective KPIs to measure outcomes.

Expectation Setting — 58%

Advice & Guidance — 100%

Project Success — 83%

Customer Service — 100%

Feedback Loop — 83%

Recommendation — 67%
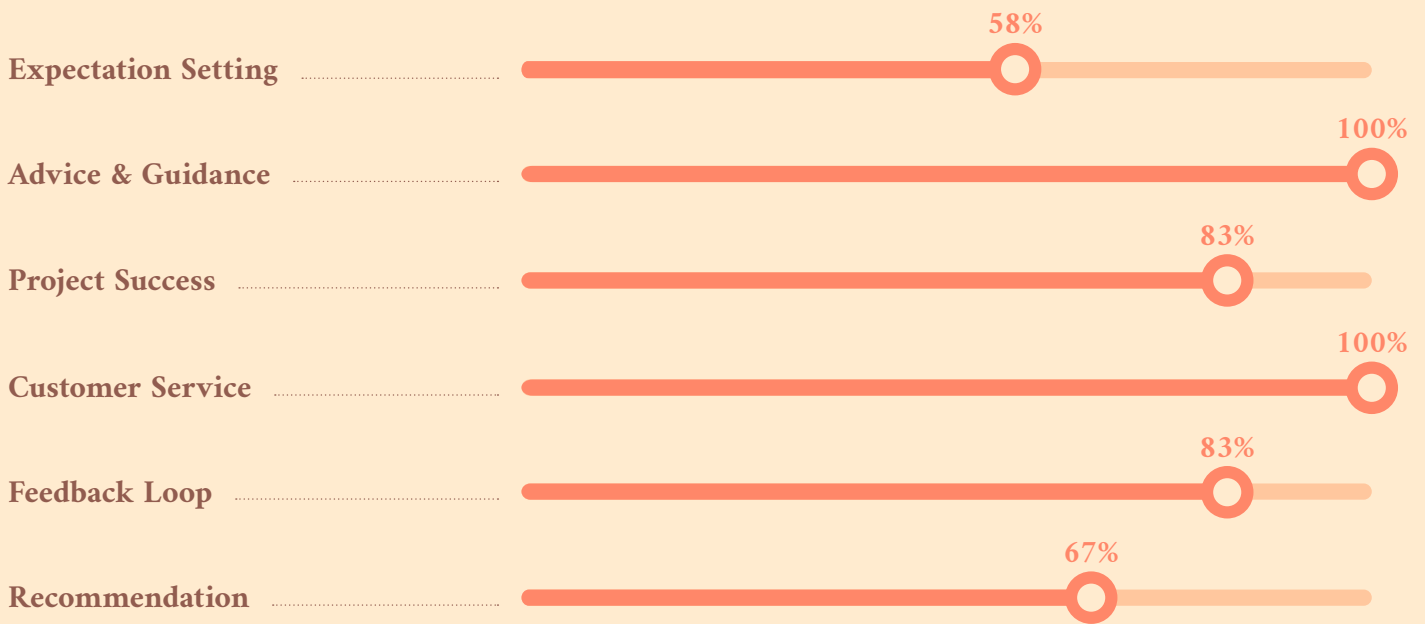
EVERY VOICE ENGAGED

Overview

Every Voice Engaged (EVE) develops and promotes the Common Ground for Action (CGA) platform, used by over 100 clients, primarily researchers and universities, to run interactive deliberation exercises for small to medium-sized groups. Active since 2012, EVE is a joint project of the National Issues Forums and the Kettering Foundation.

http://www.everyvoiceengaged.org

Every Voice Engaged

Deliberation / Consensus - building

Decision - Making / Voting

Mission / Vision

Security

Ability to execute

58

NUMBER

09
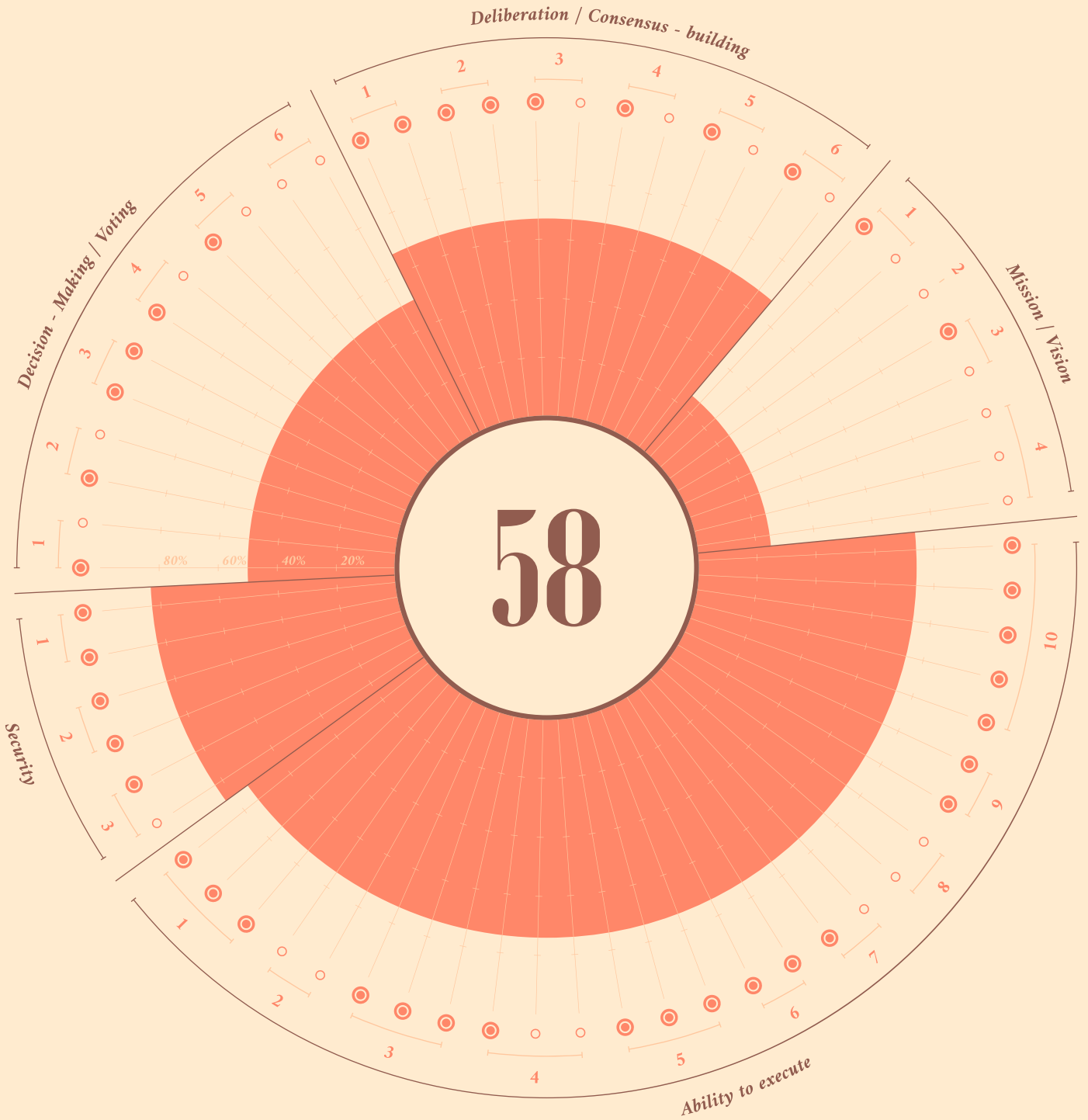
EVERY VOICE ENGAGED DATA

Name: Every Voice Engaged
Type of organisation: Non-profit
CEO: Abizar Vakharia

Year founded:
2012

Number of Clients:
125

HQ Country:
USA

Decision - Making / Voting: *6/12, 50%*
Deliberation / Consensus building: *8/12, 67%*
Mission / Vision: *2/8, 25%*
Ability to execute: *20/27, 74%*
Security: *5/6, 83%*
Bonus (Unique Selling Points): *+2*
Vendor Remit Score: 47/81, 58%
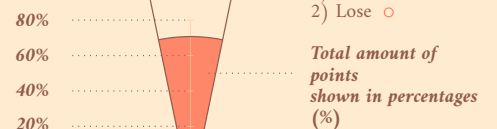
LEGEND

Grading Category

1 .... *Question number*

Points
1) Gain ◉
2) Lose ○

Total amount of points shown in percentages (%)

80%
60%
40%
20%

100 .... *Vendor Remit Score (%)*

PB
Participatory Budgeting

DM
Decision Making

Id
Idea Generation

D/C
Deliberation & Consensus Building

PC
Public Consultation
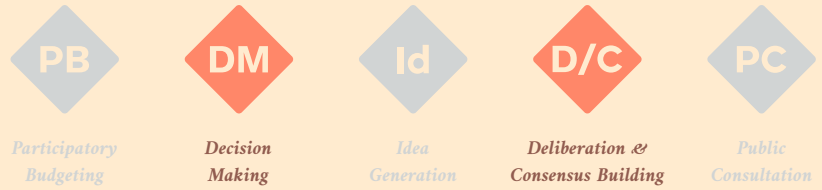
Scope of offering

The starting point for every CGA exercise is the Issue Guide. This document outlines commonly held views – referred to in CGA as "Options" – on how a particular issue (e.g. Healthcare) might be addressed (e.g. Public Healthcare, Private Healthcare, Mixed, etc.). Organisers can choose to use one of the existing Issue Guides developed by the Kettering Foundation or to design their own.

Participants are broken up into small groups of 10-20 individuals. After sharing some personal background with each other (to build trust), they are asked to use the Issue Guide to rank a number of different "Actions" under each "Option", such as "Expand Medicaid" or "Outlaw astronomical jury awards". Participants are then confronted with counter-arguments or "Drawbacks" and are asked to evaluate whether they "Can Accept", "Cannot Accept" or are "Conflicted" about these Drawbacks.

How participants evaluate each Action and Drawback is visually represented in a two-dimensional chart, where participants can see in real-time how much support each Action enjoys and the degree of consensus/ division around it. Once participants have selected all Actions and stated their position on the Drawbacks, they then debate these over the course of 60-90 minutes in a chat-room environment. Participants are reminded (via the moderator) to change their preferences if another participant persuades them to change their opinion, which in turn is then visible to all other participants. Once the exercise ends, CGA automatically generates an overview that ranks all Actions by Support and Agreement level and elicits feedback from the participants about their experience with the process.

Who should use this?

01   Universities and Research Institutes conducting deliberation exercises.

02   Community Groups and Local Authorities interested in engaging people in political discussion.

Ability to Execute

While EVE's platform has been used in hundreds of deliberative exercises, its main user is the Institute for Democratic Engagement & Accountability (IDEA) at Ohio State University, where the platform has been deployed since 2014.

With an engaged end-user community (over 90% of participants express positive sentiment following deliberation), EVE is an innovative contribution to the practice of deliberative democracy, enabling it to scale well beyond the academic environment.

However, while the Issue Guides are well-developed, there is no simple option for participants to contribute alternative Actions and Drawbacks, a factor that could constrain the platform's ability to truly capture participant sentiment.

Security

Every Voice Engaged uses standard SSL encryption and has an extensive data privacy policy which outlines in detail how personal identifiable information is separated from user submissions.

Standout features

- Intuitive graphic interface displaying support and agreement levels of selected actions in real-time
- Encourages open discussion of the pros and cons of different arguments without enforcing consensus

---

NGO / Large Donor Funding
★ ★ ★

Active Customers
★ ★ ★

Customer studies
★ ★ ★

Experience
★ ★ ★

Workforce
★ ★ ★

Sales channels
★ ★

USPs
★ ★

Encryption
🔒

User data
🔒

Storage
🔒 🔒

Blockchain
N/A

Accessibility
◉ ◉ ◉

Considered as part of software design.

Mission / Vision

The mission of Every Voice Engaged is "to create a world where everyone participates in their democracy, every day". EVE believes that the way to achieve this is to engage the community in structured conversation about each issue via the approach of deliberative decision-making.

Client Feedback

Overall EVE received strong feedback from their references, in particular with regards to customer service, feedback and follow-up as well as the deliberation process itself.

Clients valued that the online process, as opposed to face-to-face deliberation, counteracts typical social hierarchies as participants are unable to see the demographic characteristics of other participants.

Overall EVE was seen as a great tool to understand early on in the process where participants agreed, helping to move the focus quickly to areas of disagreement.

Some constructive feedback was given when it came to simplifying the setting up of sub-groups (particularly for large participant numbers) as well the overall design of the interface.

Expectation Setting — 100%

Advice & Guidance — 100%

Project Success — 75%

Customer Service — 100%

Feedback Loop — 100%

Recommendation — 100%
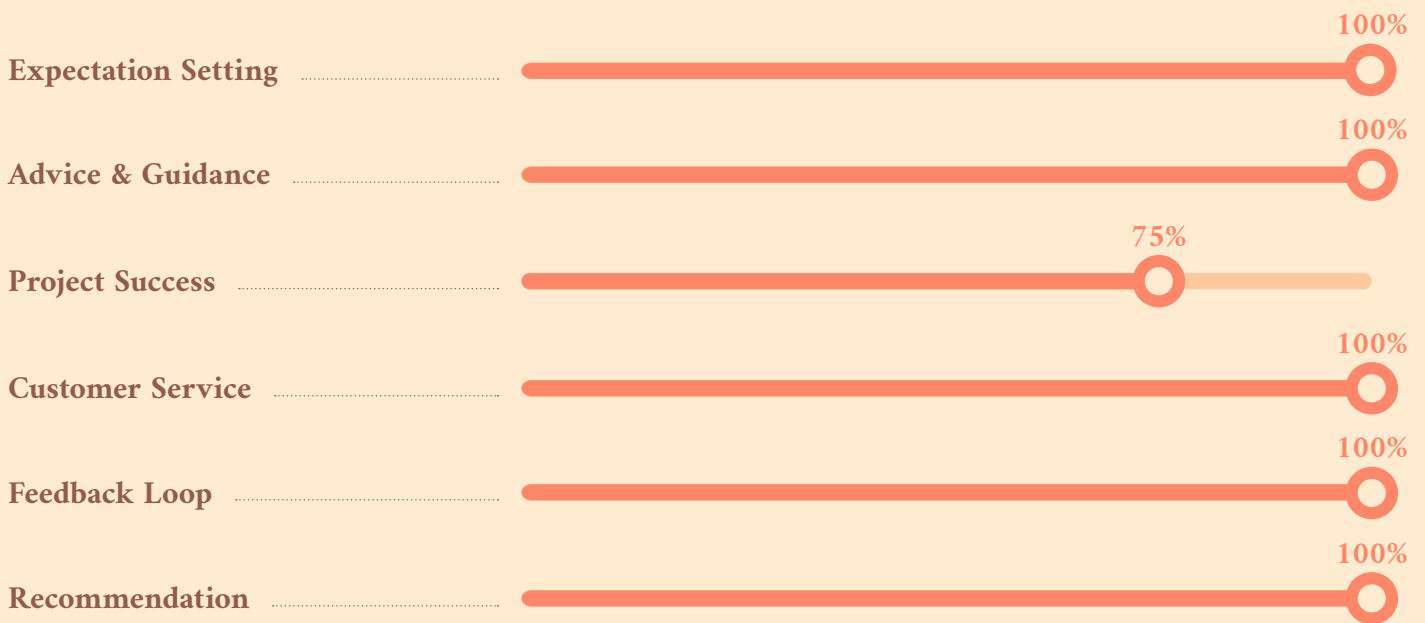
MYVOICE

Overview

MyVoice (ManaBalss in Latvian) is a public participation platform that allows Latvian citizens to submit and collect signatures for legislative proposals on the national, regional and municipal level. Behind the popular public participation platform is a non-governmental and non-profit organization founded in 2011 bearing the same name.

MyVoice

Decision - Making / Voting

Ideation

Public Consultation

Mission / Vision

Ability to execute

Security

Participatory Budgeting

80% 60% 40% 20%

76

NUMBER

10
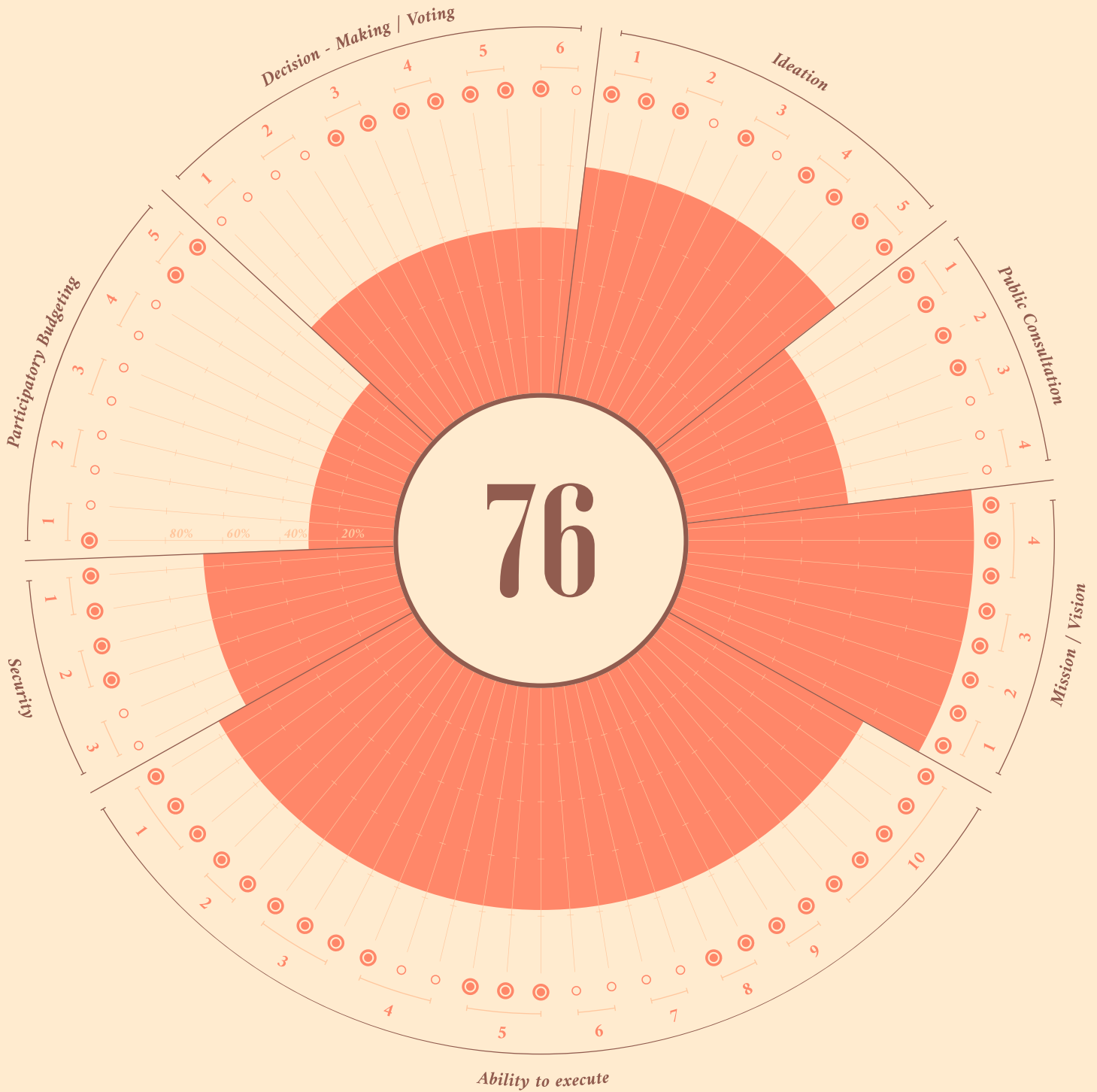
MY VOICE DATA

Name: MyVoice
Type of organisation: Non-profit
CEO: Imants Breidaks

Year founded:
2011

Number of Clients:
30 *(>480,000 users)*

HQ Country:
LATVIA

Participatory Budgeting: *3/10, 30%*
Decision - Making / Voting: *7/12, 58%*
Ideation: *8/10, 80%*
Public Consultation: *4/7, 57%*
Mission / Vision: *8/8, 100%*
Ability to execute: *21/27, 78%*
Security: *4/6, 67%*
Bonus (Unique Selling Points): *+2*
Vendor Remit Score: *73/96, 76%*

LEGEND

Grading Category

1 .... *Question number*

Points
1) Gain ◉
2) Lose ○

80%
60%
40%
20%

Total amount of points shown in percentages (%)

100

Vendor Remit Score (%)

PB	**DM**	**Id**	**D/C**	**PC**
Participatory Budgeting	*Decision Making*	*Idea Generation*	*Deliberation & Consensus Building*	*Public Consultation*
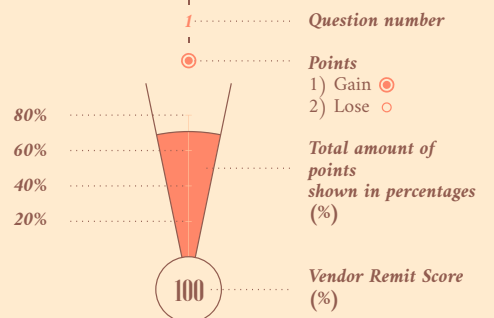
Scope of offering

Latvian organization MyVoice offers 4 services: ManaBalss (petition platform), Lemejs (customized decision making platform), Open2Vote (an opinion voting platform), and OpenSaeima (a platform for co-editing laws that is currently only available for Civic Organization representatives). Only the first two of these services have been considered in the scoring for this Report.

MyVoice's most popular platform is the petition site ManaBalss. Any citizen of Latvia who is over the age of 16 can create a suggestion for legislation on the ManaBalss website. As long as the proposal does not contravene higher-ranking law, provides a solution and includes a plan of action, volunteer experts and lawyers will be assigned to turn the suggestion into a formal proposal. All active proposals are then visible on the ManaBalss platform, with the most 'dynamic' petitions, i.e. those attracting the most signatures in recent days, at the top. Citizens can sign initiatives by authenticating their identity using their online bank account (a common authentication method in Latvia) or the official Latvian eSignature system. A cleverly integrated micro-donation system allows citizens to donate towards the upkeep of the platform after they sign a petition. Users may choose to sign (or not sign) petitions in their entirety – there is currently no option to leave comments. Under Latvian law, petitions that attract 10,000 or more signatures must be voted on by the parliament, with the initiator of the petition allowed to nominate experts to testify on the topic to the parliament. While the platform is free to use for private citizens and non-profit organisations, companies and political parties can (and do) use the platform for a cost (currently between 1-5k EUR per initiative).

Lemejs is a free-to-use decision-making platform used by Latvian municipalities mainly for participatory budgeting. Upon request, Lemejs is set up by the MyVoice organization team and can be customized to the process at hand. This usually occurs via an offline ideation process followed by an online poll, where users can be asked to vote on single-choice, multiple-choice, or weighted questions. To protect confidential information, all information is deleted one month after the process has concluded. Lemejs was not initially intended to be a participatory budgeting tool (which explains its shortcomings), but has been used by 8 Latvian municipalities for this purpose and may be developed further.

Who should use this?

01 Government entities that want to open the legislative process to citizens.

02 Political parties that want to gauge support for policy proposals.

Ability to Execute

Over 3 million votes have been cast on ManaBalss since 2011 with the most popular initiative attracting over 55,000 signatures. ManaBalss has a strong brand in Latvia, even hosting a TV show for three years where proponents and opponents of currently active petitions publicly debated the issues.

With only 7 permanent employees, ManaBalss is punching above its weight – but will likely need to grow its revenue base to expand further.

Security

ManaBalss uses standard SSL encryption on the platform. While ManaBalss authenticates users using their bank login or electronic ID, it does not verify whether a user is a citizen or over the age of 16. Instead it passes the data to the government who then verify this information with the participating banks.

Standout features

- Full lifecycle e-petition solution with a focus on the feasibility of policy proposals

- Deep integration with online banking software allowing for authentication and micro-donations

NGO / Large
Donor Funding
★ ★ ★

Active Customers
★ ★ ★

Customer studies
★ ★ ★

Experience
★ ★ ★

Workforce
★ ★ ★

Sales channels
★ ★

USPs
★ ★

Encryption
🔒

User data
🔒

Storage
🔒 🔒

Blockchain
N/A

Accessibility
◉ ◎ ◎

Not implemented or no information available.

Mission / Vision

ManaBalss's vision is to use electronic participation tools to capture public opinion and to facilitate proposals for significant change – thereby promoting the development of a civil society.
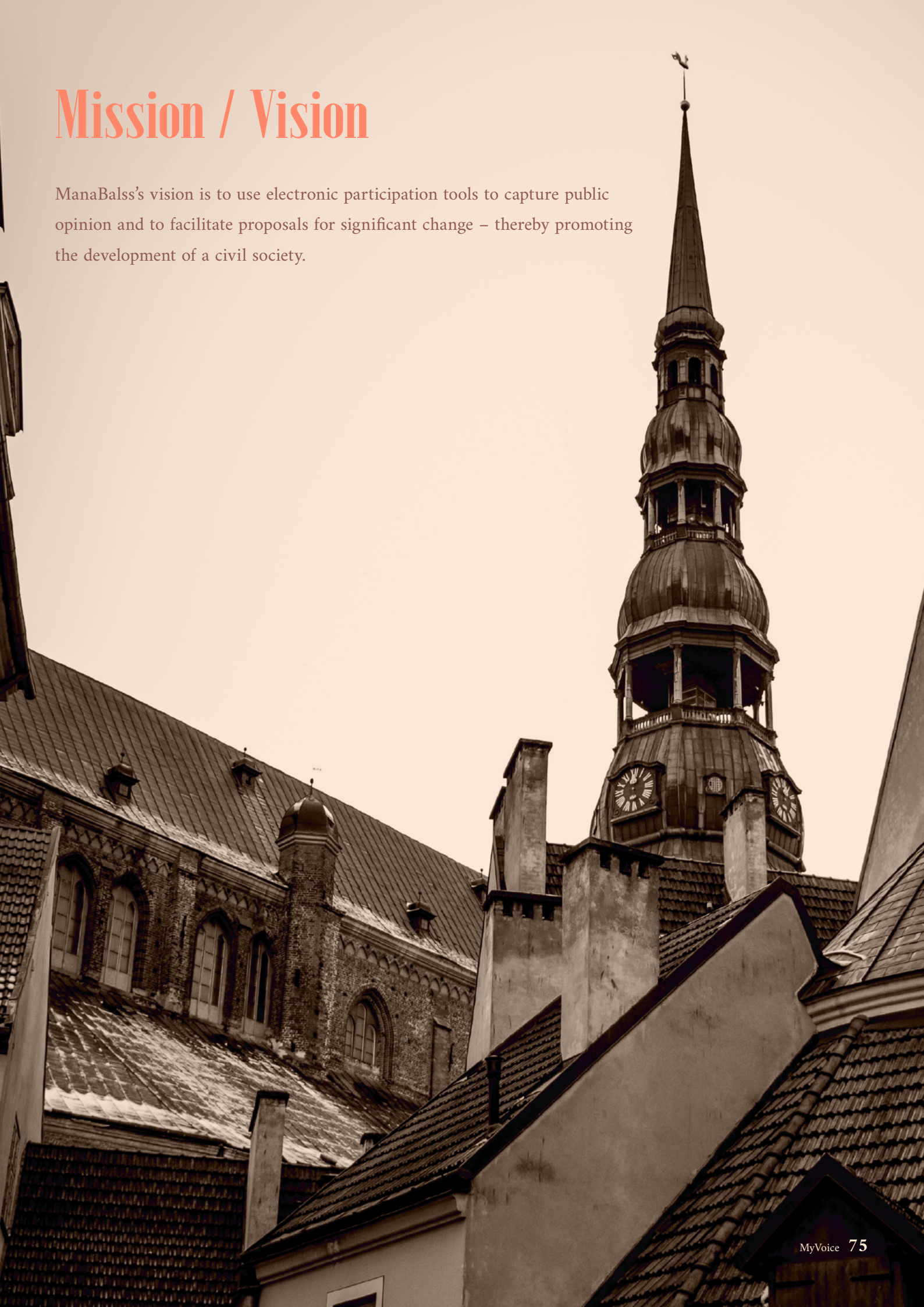
Client Feedback

ManaBalss received outstanding overall feedback from the clients and users we spoke to, with particular praise given to the transparency and simplicity of the platform. Customer service was consistently highlighted (with ManaBalss helping with formulating and advising on the petition process, and delivering very fast response times), as was the ability to get ideas from citizens directly (rather than being filtered through an NGO).

Manabalss also kept clients informed of how a petition was progressing through the legislative process.

Expectation Setting — 87,5%

Advice & Guidance — 100%

Project Success — 100%

Customer Service — 100%

Feedback Loop — 100%

Recommendation — 100%

PLACESPEAK

Overview

https://www.placespeak.com

PlaceSpeak is a public consultation platform that uses geo-spatial authentication to identify location-specific user groups. This allows clients, primarily local authorities, to target consultations at specific neighbourhoods to more accurately understand local feedback on proposed projects. The company started in Vancouver, Canada and now serves over 30 communities across Canada, the United States and Northern Ireland.

PlaceSpeak.

86

Deliberation | Consensus - building

Ideation

Public Consultation

Decision - Making / Voting

Mission / Vision

Security

Ability to execute

80% 60% 40% 20%

NUMBER

11
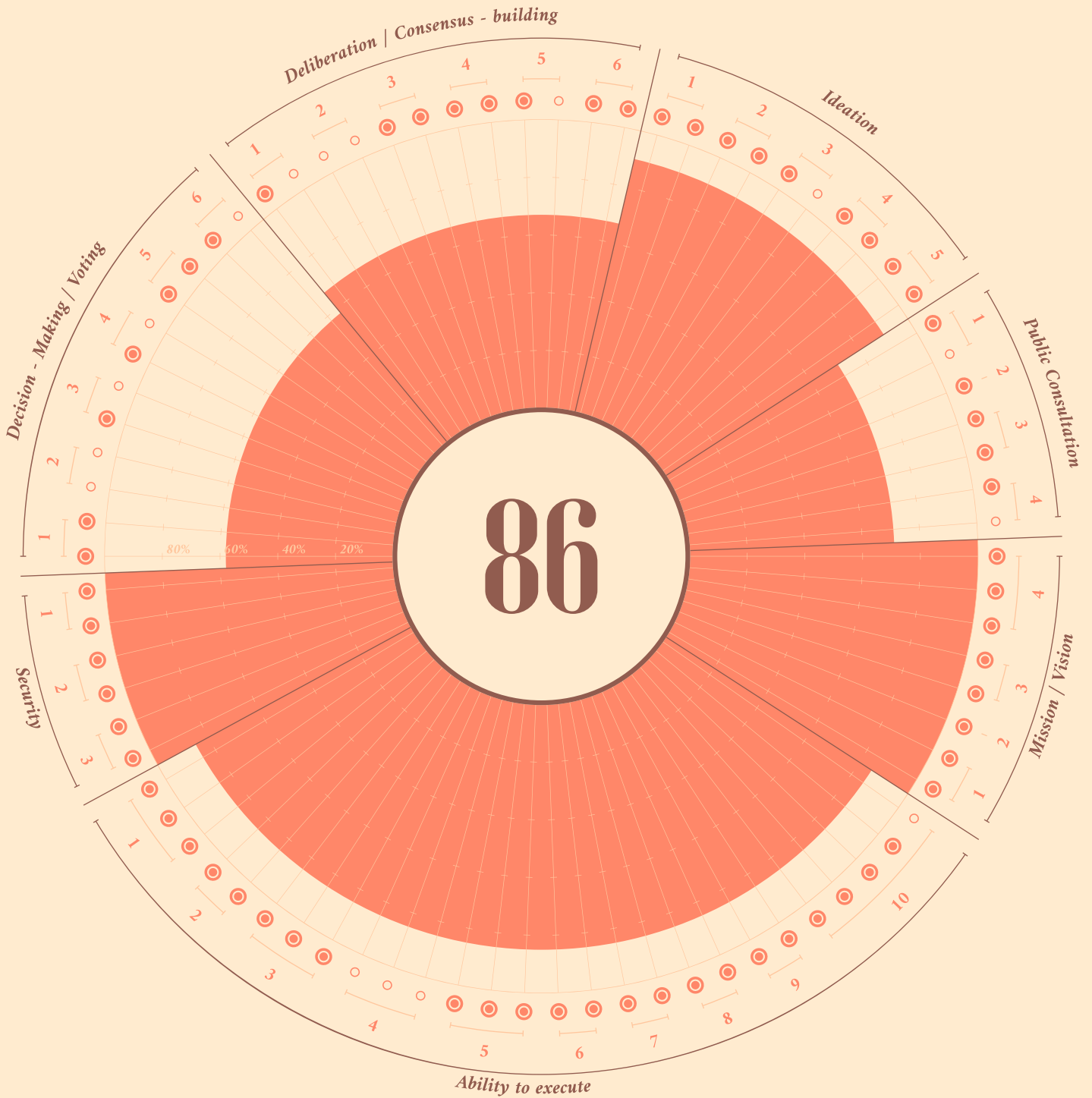
PLACESPEAK DATA

Name: Placespeak
Type of organisation: Private company
CEO: Colleen Hardwick

Year founded:
2012

Number of Clients:
25

HQ Country:
CANADA

Decision - Making / Voting: *7/12, 58%*
Deliberation / Consensus building: *8/12, 67%*
Ideation: *9/10, 90%*
Public Consultation: *5/7, 71%*
Mission / Vision: *8/8, 100%*
Ability to execute: *23/27, 85%*
Security: *6/6, 100%*
Bonus (Unique Selling Points): *+2*
Vendor Remit Score: 84/98, 86%

LEGEND

Grading Category

1 .... *Question number*

Points
1) Gain ◉
2) Lose ○

80%
60%
40%
20%

*Total amount of points
shown in percentages
(%)*

100

*Vendor Remit Score
(%)*

PB
Participatory Budgeting

DM
Decision Making

Id
Idea Generation

D/C
Deliberation & Consensus Building

PC
Public Consultation
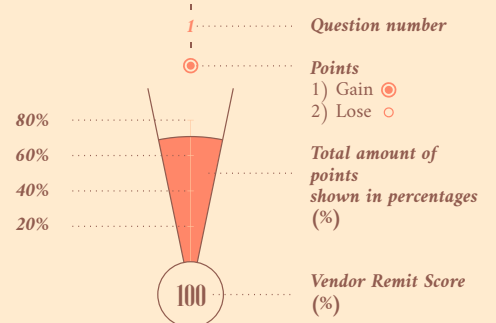
Scope of offering

The starting point for every PlaceSpeak consultation is the Overview page where the organisers can upload text, images and videos to explain the background and process of their consultation. A map of the consultation area can also be included.

Additional documents (e.g. maps, previous community reports, etc.) can be uploaded to the Resources Folder page. Organisers can then add: Polls (where organisers can setup a simple voting feature); Surveys (which collects survey data from participants); Discussions (where participants can answer questions, comment and upvote/downvote previous comments); Noticeboards (where participants can leave free text comments); PlaceIt (where users can report issues or ideas by placing tags on a map); and Events (where organisers can advertise e.g. public meetings). The organisers can decide who can take part in every aspect and can limit participation by location boundaries. Users can stay updated on any new content either by receiving email notifications or by viewing the timeline feature on the project's front page.

PlaceSpeak uses the methodology of the Digital Identification and Authentication Council of Canada (DIACC) to confirm the exact geographic location of every participant. This allows for validation of location using address data from telecommunication and utility providers, while giving the user full control over what data they want to share. Additional privacy controls ensure that organisers cannot identify individual contributors.

By leveraging location data, the software can update participants on upcoming consultations in their area. PlaceSpeak even auto-generates so-called 'Seed' consultations from public consultation data – once a pre-set threshold of users expresses an interest in participating, PlaceSpeak automatically notifies the local authority to consider a consultation.

Who should use this?

01 Organisers that want to strongly tie participation to geographic location.

02 Anyone who wants to create and maintain a community of users that exists outside of specific projects.

Ability to Execute

PlaceSpeak was built with the collaboration of three Canadian universities, but now maintains less than five employees. For such a small number of staff, PlaceSpeak's reach is significant with over 30 communities having at some stage run projects on the platform, all of which are minutely documented on the website's extensive Case Studies section: From securing night filming permission for RoboCop (city regulations required a consultation before granting permission) to predicting a referendum result with greater accuracy than two major polling companies, to countless projects about parks, housing and public health, PlaceSpeak has much to be proud of.

PlaceSpeak's SentiMap technology, which connects participants to geographic locations, won the 2018 SAP Partner Award (SentiMap runs on SAP HANA) and its partnership with SurveyGizmo significantly expanded its ability to integrate surveys. PlaceSpeak also launched a Geo API and Wordpress plug-in which allows others to utilise its geo-data in anonymised form.

Security

PlaceSpeak has implemented a 'Privacy by Design' architecture based on the work of Dr. Ann Cavoukian which enforces strict privacy controls throughout the product lifecycle.

PlaceSpeak's user data is hosted in Canada and enterprise users have the ability to choose a data centre in their province for sensitive data. Communication with the site is secured via https and passwords are encrypted.

Standout features
- Links users to physical places without revealing that location to clients
- Concept of 'Seed' consultations builds groundswell among users to nudge local authorities to engage digitally

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NGO / Large Donor Funding
★ ★ ★

Active Customers
★ ★ ★

Customer studies
★ ★ ★

Experience
★ ★ ★

Workforce
★ ★ ★

Sales channels
★ ★

USPs
★ ★

Encryption
🔒

User data
🔒

Storage
🔒 🔒

Blockchain
N/A

Accessibility
◎ ◎ ◎

Follows WCAG or similar standard.

Mission / Vision

PlaceSpeak's mission is to "promote authentic meaningful dialogue on local issues". The company name derives from the idea of people claiming their physical space (their neighbourhood, community, etc.) and – resulting from the sense of community – finding their voice. As a commercial vendor, much of the marketing information today focusses on the value to customers, but the original vision of empowering citizens is still reflected in the architecture of the software itself: rather than starting with an organisation and then building an audience, PlaceSpeak encourages citizens to sign up first – and then be alerted to organisations running consultations in their area.
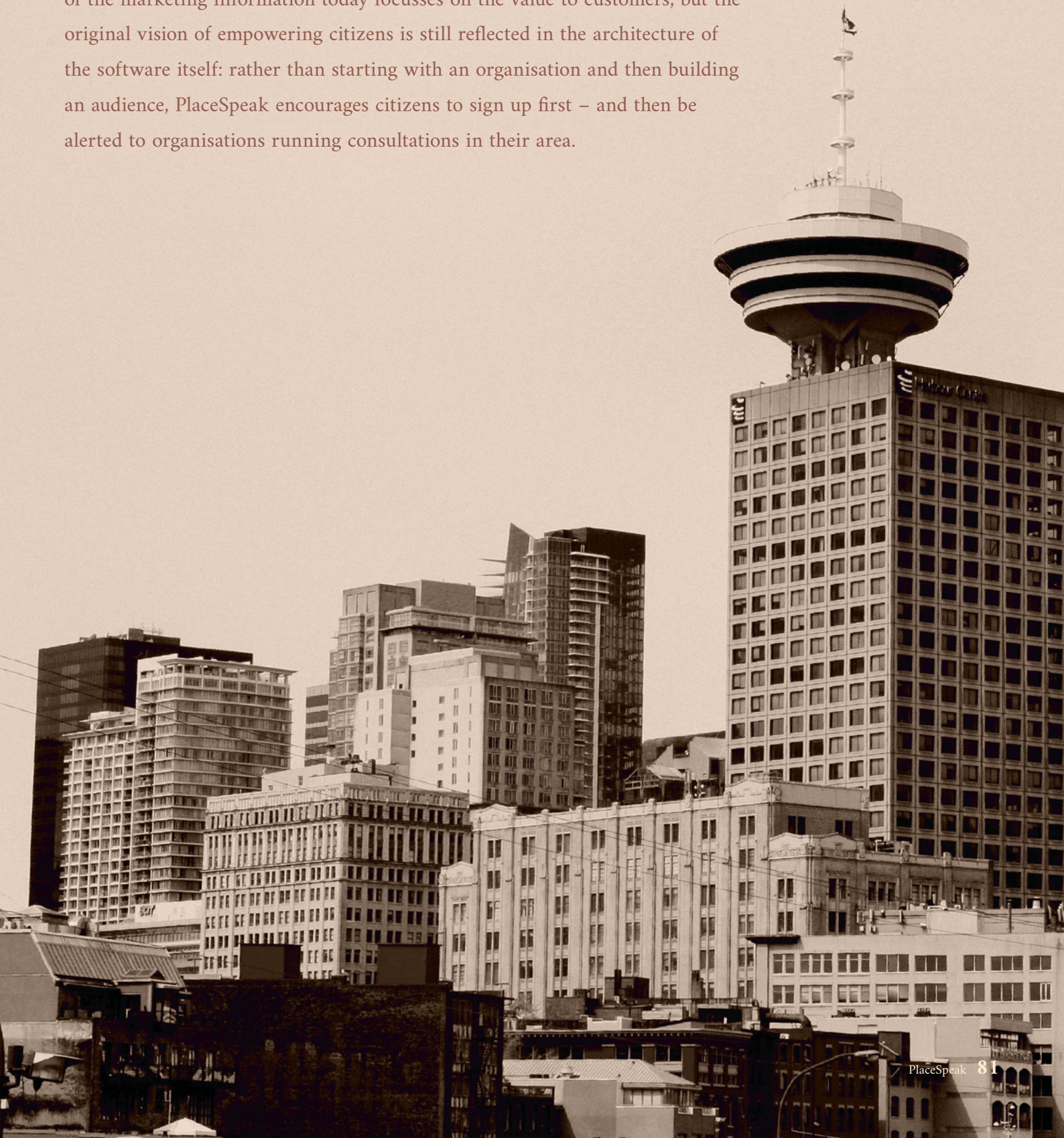
Client Feedback

Overall, client feedback for PlaceSpeak has been positive, with clients particularly lauding PlaceSpeak's ability to map users geographically.

Some feedback asked for more sophisticated reporting of outcomes, with others noting that while customer service is very responsive, a more defined service level agreement could be helpful to understand when (and when not) clients could call on PlaceSpeak to engage directly with users.

Expectation Setting — 62,5%

Advice & Guidance — 100%

Project Success — 75%

Customer Service — 75%

Feedback Loop — 100%

Recommendation — 75%
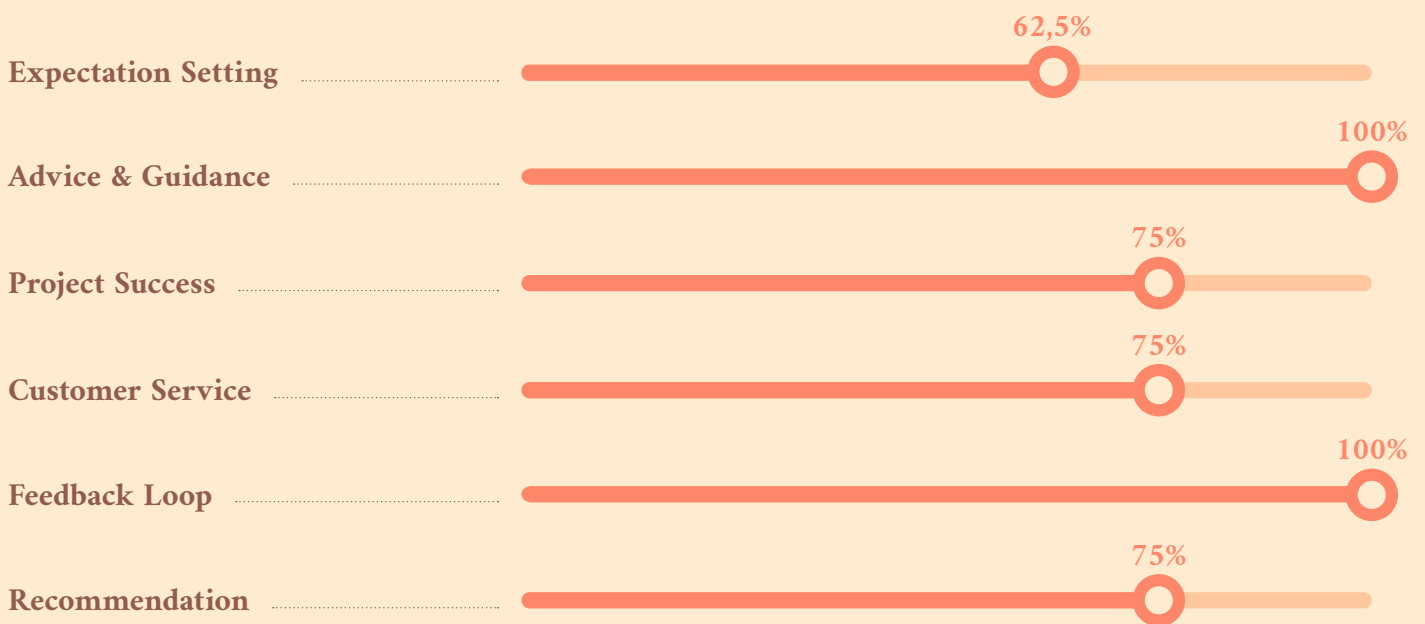
RAHVAALGATUS

Overview

https://rahvaalgatus.ee/

The Rahvaalgatus.ee platform (Estonian for Citizen Initiative Portal) was set up by The Estonian Cooperation Assembly (ECA), with funding by the Estonian President's office, to implement a law, passed in 2014, that allows residents of Estonia to propose and sign collective proposals for the government to consider. If 1,000 residents sign the proposal (or 1% of voting age residents for local proposals) it must be debated by the Estonian parliament (for national issues) or by the relevant local authority. Over 440 proposals have been submitted via the platform with over 700,000 signatures collected.

Decision - Making | Voting

Deliberation / Consensus - building

Participatory Budgeting

Ideation

65

Security

Mission / Vision

Ability to execute

80% 60% 40% 20%

NUMBER

12
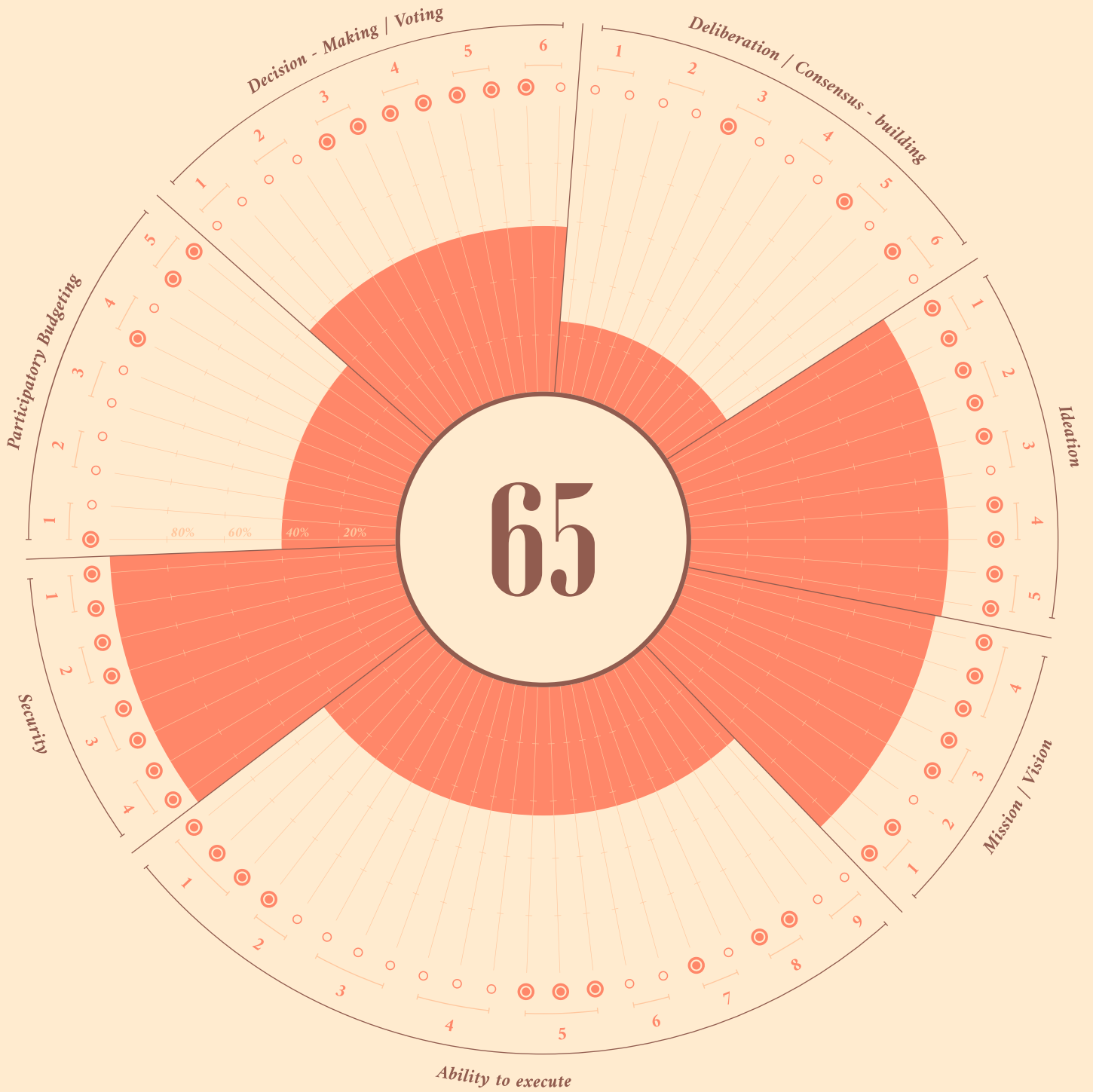
RAHVAAL ATUS DATA

Name: Rahvaalgatus
Type of organisation: Non-profit
CEO: Kairi Tilga (ECA)

Year founded:

2016

Number of Clients:

>700,000 signatures

HQ Country:

ESTONIA

Participatory Budgeting: *4/10, 40%*
Decision - Making / Voting: *7/12, 58%*
Deliberation / Consensus building: *3/12, 25%*
Ideation: *9/10, 90%*
Mission / Vision: *7/8, 88%*
Ability to execute: *10/22, 45%*
Security: *8/8, 100%*
Bonus (Unique Selling Points): *+2*
Vendor Remit Score: *64/98, 65%*

LEGEND

Grading Category

1 .... *Question number*

Points
1) Gain ◉
2) Lose ○

80% ....
60% ....
40% ....
20% ....

*Total amount of points
shown in percentages
(%)*

100 .... *Vendor Remit Score
(%)*

PB	DM	Id	D/C	PC
Participatory Budgeting	*Decision Making*	*Idea Generation*	*Deliberation & Consensus Building*	*Public Consultation*
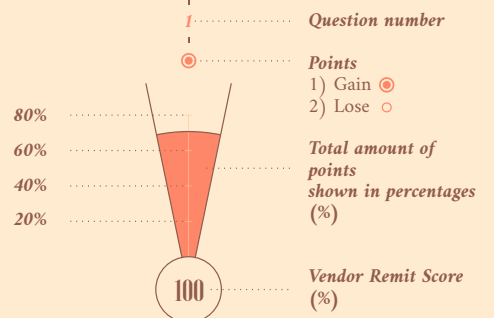
Scope of offering

Any user can upload a proposal and discuss it with other users to create a draft bill. Users can also link to external documents to inform the debate. Once a proposed measure has been finalised, users can vote on it, as well as leave public comments. Any proposal that reaches the required threshold is then submitted to the Parliament or local authority. All votes are digitally signed to ensure that users are authorised to vote. After a proposal is submitted to the parliamentary committee, ECA continues to track its progress by publishing updates on the legislative process as well any government documents, responses, etc. to the proposal.

In addition to the petition platform, ECA has also started offering "The Democracy Workbook" platform in schools. Like the petition platform, it is fully integrated with the Estonian electronic ID system, and school children can use the tool for simple voting (e.g. for class president), participatory budgeting (e.g. for school events), and as an electronic signature sandbox. The aim of this platform is to prepare young Estonians for being active citizens in later life.

Users can also view a local map that shows Democracy Workbook processes and Rahvaalgatus.ee proposals that are active at the municipal level. This live data visualization enhances transparency and accountability.

Who should use this?

01 Anyone interested in crowdsourcing proposals (legislative or otherwise).

02 Those who prioritize an open-source solution.

Ability to Execute

While Rahvaalgatus.ee is currently only used in Estonia, the platform has been released as open source. The open source licence conditions also allow commercial use and the platform could thus easily be adapted to other countries and customers. With a small workforce of four employees and limited exposure, Rahvaalgatus.ee has some way to go to build international awareness. However, its popularity in Estonia cannot be questioned. In 2023, a record 320,000 signatures were collected and over 200 proposals originating on the system were submitted to national and local governments. One proposal alone regarding a new car tax attracted over 65,000 signatures, and has led to the Government delaying introduction of the tax and rethinking its approach. The simplicity of the platform and the transparency it provides for citizen-initiated legislation make Rahvaalgatus.ee a compelling offering for countries looking to deepen citizen participation.

Security

Rahvaalgatus.ee is able to leverage Estonia's advanced public digital infrastructure to fit seamlessly into the national digital architecture. This includes using the national digital signature process to sign proposals, as well as the national data processing and privacy procedures which utilise blockchain. Digital signatures submitted via Rahvaalgatus.ee are verified against the national register by government officials. Users can delete their user account and all associated data.

Standout features

- Full ideation process prior to submission – leading to well-articulated proposals

- Transparent process along the entire lifecycle of an initiative

NGO / Large Donor Funding
★ ★ ★

Active Customers
★ ★ ★

Customer studies
★ ★ ★

Experience
★ ★ ★

Workforce
★ ★ ★

Sales channels
★ ★

USPs
★ ★

Encryption
🔒

User data
🔒

Storage
🔒 🔒

Blockchain
🔒 🔒

Accessibility
◉ ◉ ◉

Considered as part of software design.

Mission / Vision

Rahvaalgatus.ee has its origins in the Estonian People's Assembly of 2014, a platform aimed at crowdsourcing ideas and proposals to amend Estonian laws related to the practice of democracy (e.g. electoral laws). Its aim is to create "more possibilities for citizens to engage in policy-making between (and in addition to) elections". By providing a transparent record of what happens with proposals raised on the platform, Rahvaalgatus.ee hopes to break what it calls the "vicious circle of distrust", where citizens don't engage with the legislative process, because they have not seen follow-up on previous proposals.

SKYVOTE

https://www.skyvote.it/

Overview

SkyVote is an electronic voting solution developed by Italian tech company Multicast srl. Originally developed to facilitate voting at board and shareholder meetings, SkyVote's newest solution, SkyVote Cloud, is a distributed voting platform that can be used in large-scale elections.

skyvote®

Mission / Vision

Decision - Making / Voting

Security

Ability to execute

78

80% 60% 40% 20%

NUMBER

13
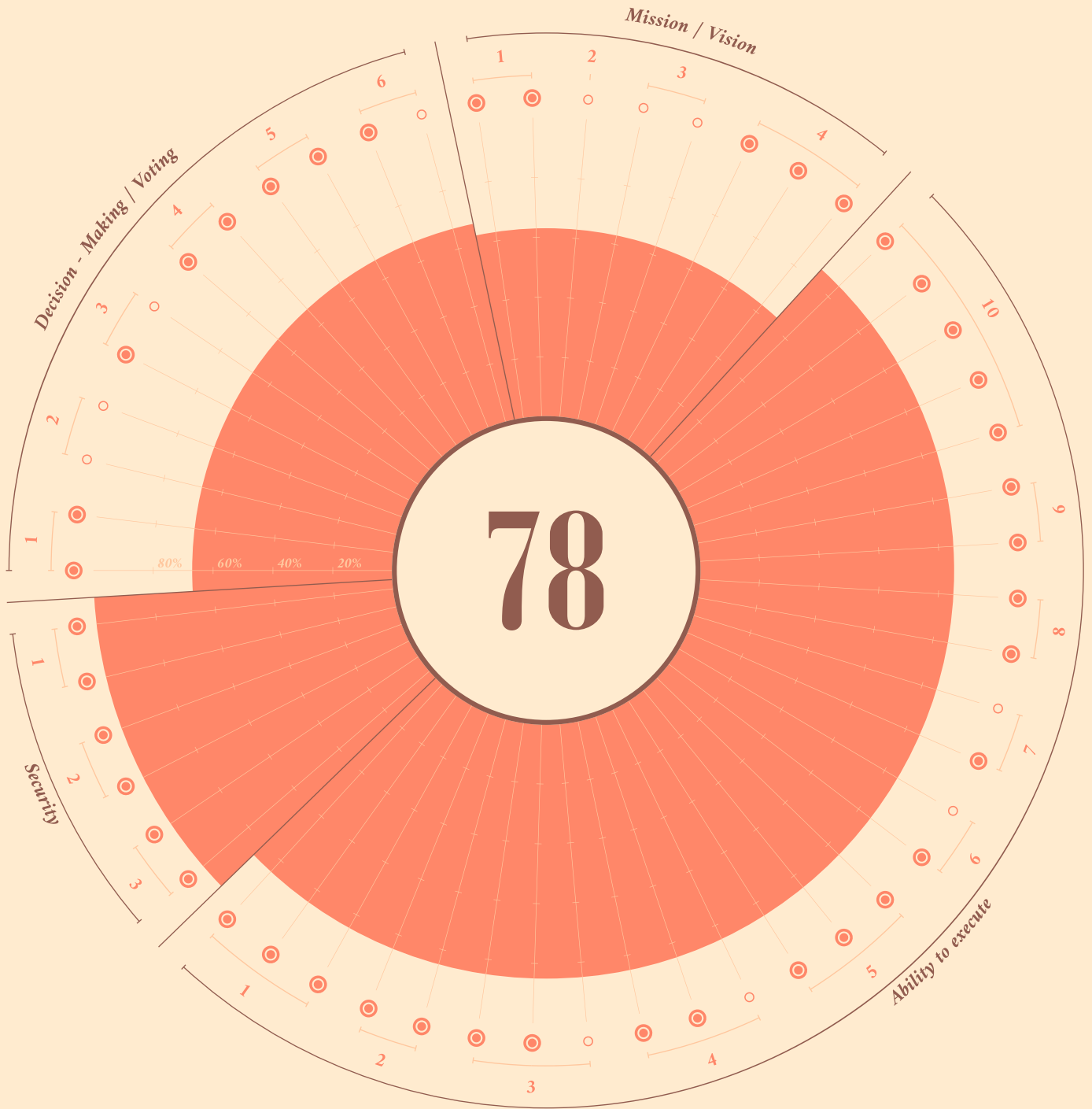
SKYVOTE DATA

Name: Multicast srl
Type of organisation: Private company
CEO: Giovanni Di Sotto

Year founded:
2004

Number of Clients:
100

HQ Country:
ITALY

Decision - Making / Voting: 8/12, 67%
Mission / Vision: 5/8, 63%
Ability to execute: 23/27, 85%
Security: 6/6, 100%
Bonus (Unique Selling Points): +2
Vendor Remit Score: 54/69, 78%

LEGEND

Grading Category

1 .... *Question number*

Points
1) Gain ◉
2) Lose ○

80% ....
60% ....
40% ....
20% ....

Total amount of points shown in percentages (%)

100 .... *Vendor Remit Score (%)*

PB
Participatory Budgeting

DM
Decision Making

Id
Idea Generation

D/C
Deliberation & Consensus Building

PC
Public Consultation
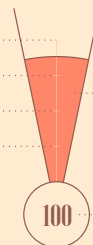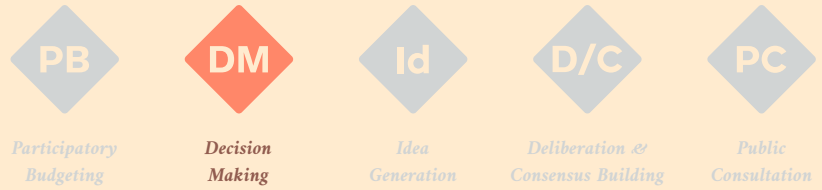
Scope of offering

SkyVote is available as synchronous meeting software (SkyVote Meeting and SkyVote Decisions) as well as an asynchronous mass voting tool (SkyVote Cloud). While only SkyVote Cloud is designed to handle large numbers of participants, SkyVote Meeting and SkyVote Decisions offer extensive functionality for smaller meetings (e.g. board meetings). With SkyVote Meeting, participants can review the agenda, download meeting documents and vote on motions while engaging with other participants via the integrated video-conferencing platform. SkyVote Decisions is used before a meeting by officers of the organisation (e.g. treasurer, president, chairperson, etc.) to build the agenda, prepare documents and link them to agenda items, and then after the meeting to assign deadlines and owners to tasks. In both applications, SkyVote uses role-based security to determine who in the organisation can access what type of document, and even watermarks downloaded documents with personal identifiers to prevent unauthorised distribution of privileged information.

SkyVote Cloud offers a variety of voting options: single or multiple candidate selection, free text or searchable lists (e.g. for union elections with 1000s of possible candidate options) and even condition-based voting (where e.g. a voter has to choose a number of candidates of each gender). On limited candidate lists, the software forces voters to scroll through all candidates before casting a vote, although voters also have the option to submit a blank vote. SkyVote Cloud, Meeting and Decisions can also be used in combination, meaning that e.g. a large association can use SkyVote Meeting to share agendas, motions and video and then integrate SkyVote Cloud to vote on these motions with large numbers of participants.

Since 2022, SkyVote has made new additions to its features, such as SkyVote People, SkyVote Monitor and SkyVote Transcript, which enhance its online and offline workflow management (e.g. with registration, identification and record-keeping capabilities).

Who should use this?

01 Companies and associations that want to run effective board and member meetings.

02 Organisations, political parties and public sector entities running votes at scale.

Ability to Execute

Multicast currently has 20 employees and SkyVote Cloud is used by 100 customers and industry bodies, many of the latter consisting of multiple, independent organisations. The platform has enabled votes for as many as 35,000 users at a time.

While the company currently only operates in Italy, the decision of the 5-Star-Movement (M5S) to use SkyVote for party-internal decisions has generated significant media attention for the platform which will help to accelerate Multicast's stated aim of expanding beyond the Italian market.

Security

Multicast uses standard SSL encryption for its website and a sophisticated encryption system developed by Thales Gemalto to secure ballots on the user's device and for communication with the election server. SkyVote is designed to meet GDPR and the Italian AgID privacy standard. Clients have the option to store data on local servers in Italy or use AWS.

In addition to being fully ISO 27001 (Information Security Management) certified, Multicast also has ISO 27017 (Security Controls for Cloud Services) and ISO 27018 (Protection of PII in Public Clouds) certifications.

Standout features

- Seamless integration of a video platform into the voting process.

- Condition-based voting options using intuitive design.

NGO / Large Donor Funding
★ ★ ★

Active Customers
★ ★ ★

Customer studies
★ ★ ★

Experience
★ ★ ★

Workforce
★ ★ ★

Sales channels
★ ★

USPs
★ ★

🛡 *ISO 27001*

Encryption
🔒

User data
🔒

Storage
🔒 🔒

Blockchain
N/A

Accessibility
◉ ◉ ◉

Considered as part of software design.

Mission / Vision

Multicast's vision is to contribute to digital transformation by "bringing citizens closer to the tools of direct democracy". SkyVote has been developed to improve what the organisation sees as two key aspects of democracy: participation and freedom of expression, whether that means helping people living with disability to vote independently or associations achieving higher levels of participation. At the same time, Multicast acknowledges the importance of security in online voting with MultiCast CEO Giovanni di Sotto calling for the regulation of the online voting industry and the establishment of enforceable standards that all vendors can be measured against.

Client Feedback

Feedback for SkyVote was overall very strong with users praising the speed and scalability of the platform, as well as the quick response to customer queries.

Users liked that SkyVote enables hybrid voting with iPads provided in physical locations while noting the strong security and ease of use of the solution. In one instance, SkyVote increased the participation rate from 30% to 80% compared to an offline vote.

Expectation Setting   50%

Advice & Guidance   100%

Project Success   100%

Customer Service   100%

Feedback Loop   50%

Recommendation   100%
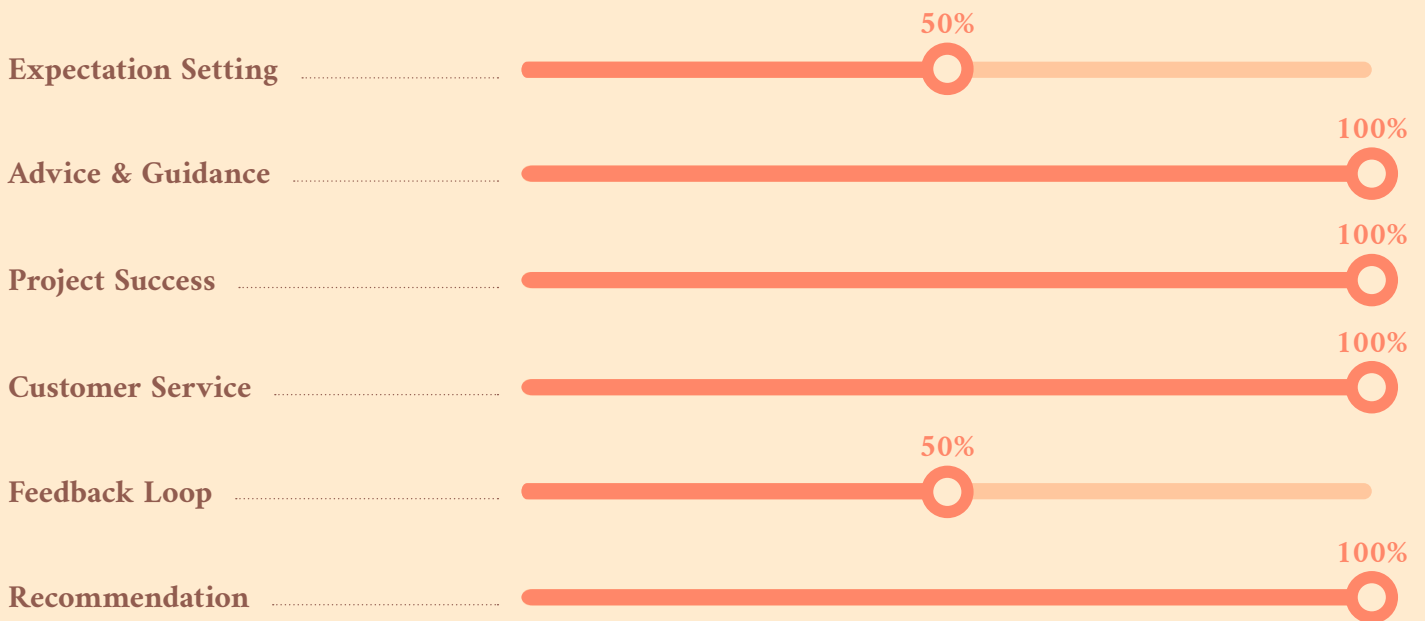
SLIDO

http://www.sli.do

Overview

Slido is an audience engagement platform that allows organisers to pose questions, polls and quizzes to participants. Headquartered in Slovakia, Slido now also has offices in the UK and has been used at over 5 million events. Slido has been used in over 120 countries and counts companies like Oracle, TomTom, and Glovo among its clients. In 2021, Slido was acquired by industry giant Cisco.

slido

Ideation

Decision - Making / Voting

Mission / Vision

Security

Ability to execute

65

NUMBER

14
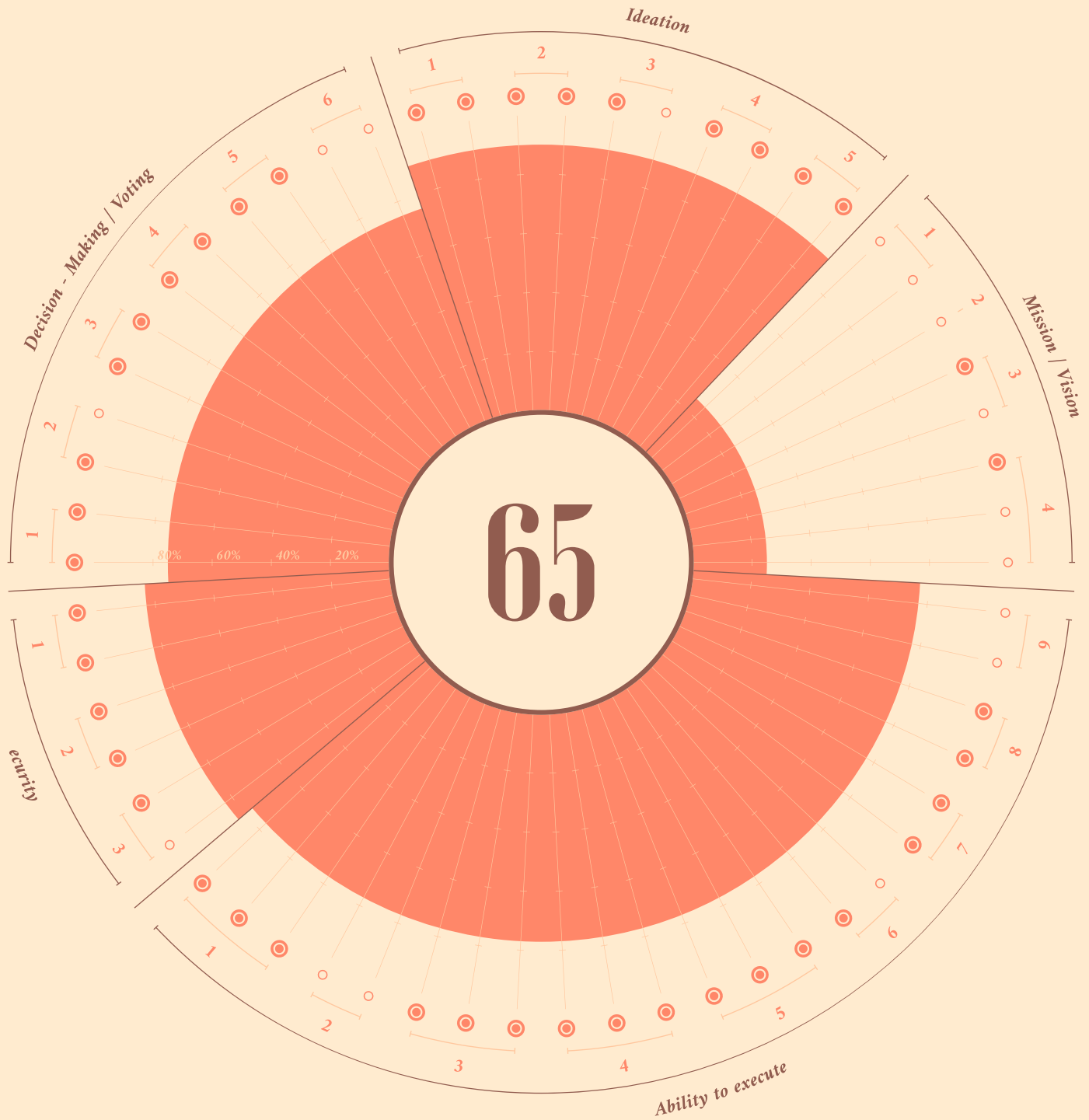
SLIDO DATA

Name: Slido
Type of organisation: Private company
CEO: Peter Komorník

Year founded:
2012

Number of Events:
5,000,000

HQ Country:
SLOVAKIA

Decision - Making / Voting: *9/12, 75%*
Ideation: *9/10, 90%*
Mission / Vision: *2/8, 25%*
Ability to execute: *17/22, 77%*
Security: *5/6, 83%*
Bonus (Unique Selling Points): *+2*
Vendor Remit Score: 48/74, 65%

LEGEND

Grading Category

1 .... *Question number*

Points
1) Gain ◉
2) Lose ○

80%
60%
40%
20%

Total amount of points shown in percentages (%)

100 .... *Vendor Remit Score (%)*

PB	DM	Id	D/C	PC
Participatory Budgeting	*Decision Making*	*Idea Generation*	*Deliberation & Consensus Building*	*Public Consultation*
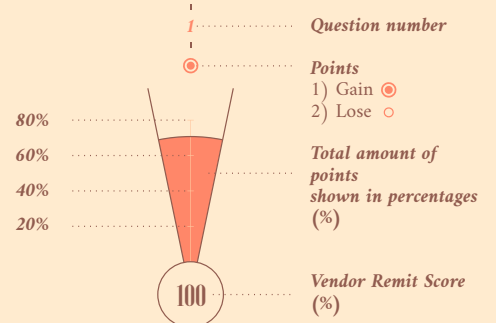
Scope of offering

Slido offers its customers multiple ways to engage with online and offline audiences: Q&A (where the audience can ask and vote on existing questions – with the ability for a moderator to select a subset to display on stage); Surveys & Polls (which can be single choice, multiple choice, open text, word cloud or star rating); Quizzes (which can be used with automatic timers); and Ideas (which let participants start from a blank canvas and add ideas, comments and vote on other ideas).

For all engagement types, results update in real time on the screen, nudging other participants to engage and creating a gamification feel to the experience.

Slido comes with full integration with Google Slides, Power Point, Microsoft Teams, Zoom and Webex, allows clients to embed live video and even offers a Switcher app which allows organisers to seamlessly switch between PowerPoint (or other types of files and formats) and Slido. The comprehensive analytics tool lets organisers understand the most popular questions, identify influencers in the audience and share data with the audience using analytics.

Who should use this?

01 Organisations that want to enhance participation in face-to-face or virtual meetings and gain fixed data points (e.g. poll results) that can structure and focus a conversation.

Ability to Execute

Slido has successfully established itself as a leader in the audience engagement space, with numerous corporations and major events (e.g. the WebSummit) relying on its technology for attendee engagement. With a workforce of over 260 employees, Slido is well positioned to continue to dominate this niche. Slido's integration with other industry-leading applications (e.g. GSuite and, most recently, Zoom) makes it an attractive proposition for corporate clients already using these products.

Security

Slido uses 256-bit encryption for storage and data transfer and offers integration with multiple Single-Sign-On solutions (Google OAuth, OneLogin, etc.). All data is hosted on AWS servers in Ireland and Germany.

Slido outlines its security and data policies on a dedicated website in great detail and maintains an ISO 27001 certification (Information Security Management System).

Standout features

- Switcher app that allows organisers to seamlessly transition between other presentation formats and Slido

- Real-time audience updates to create an interactive experience for audiences

NGO / Large Donor Funding
★ ☆ ☆

Active Customers
★ ★ ★

Customer studies
★ ★ ★

Experience
★ ★ ★

Workforce
★ ★ ★

Sales channels
★ ☆

USPs
★ ★

ISO 27001

Encryption
🔒

User data
🔒

Storage
🔒 🔒

Blockchain
N/A

Accessibility
◎ ◎ ◎

Follows WCAG or similar standard.

Mission / Vision

Slido's mission is "to transform how meetings and events are run around the world". For a software solution primarily designed for the corporate world, Slido certainly offers increased participation for employees and conference attendees, and some of its features (e.g. the ability to comment or submit ideas anonymously) strengthen an honest exchange of information. Slido's focus remains on the employer side, allowing companies to partially choreograph participation by filtering the information the audience can see. All of this makes sense from a commercial point of view, but underlines that Slido is more engaged in corporate evolution than political participation per se, despite significant crossover functionality (e.g. in facilitating discussion and handling information flows) that could be applied in more public contexts.

PART

234

p. 100

v. 15

Year founded:
2001

HQ Country:
DENMARK

Launched in 2001 in Denmark, Assembly Voting specializes in providing digital voting solutions for public sector entities, private companies, NGOs and other institutions.

ASSEMBLY VOTING

https://assemblyvoting.com/

Overview

Name: Assembly Voting
Type of organisation: Private company
CEO: Jacob Gyldenkærne

PB DM Id D/C PC

Scope of Offering

Assembly Voting recently combined its offerings into one product - Electa - which permits two main modalities for voting: 'scheduled voting' (e.g. traditional asynchronous electoral voting) and 'live conference voting' (e.g. voting at a party conference or other meeting) which can be combined with a livestream of the event. The voting process itself is customizable, with organizers able to choose from various voting systems, to allow anonymous or non-anonymous voting, and to impose quorum or consensus requirements. Clients can also choose between self-service or a fully-supported implementation of the process.

In addition, Assembly Voting provides two support models: Pre-Election and Assist.

The Assembly Voting Pre-Election system is designed to support activity in the run-up to elections. It enables clients to configure elections, and to provide a designated online space for candidates to upload a profile of themselves, so that voters can acquaint themselves with the candidates in advance of voting.

Finally, Assembly Voting Assist provides add-ons for online voting solutions. This includes a Support module that allows voters to receive help from election officials, a Phone module that allows voting via text or email, and the Digital Voter List which facilitates electronic management of registered voters.

Ability to Execute

With over 30 employees, Assembly Voting operates as a fair-sized company, with a dedicated team of professionals based in Denmark. The company reports that its solutions have been used in over 7400 election events, encompassing 43 million voters in over 75 countries and 1100 clients.

Among others, Assembly Voting has been used by The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Parliamentary Assembly and the Conservative People's Party in Denmark. Of particular note is its participation in the Mobile Voting Project by Tusk Philanthropies to develop a U.S. based mobile voting solution.

Security

True to its focus on security, Assembly Voting is fully compliant with the EU GDPR legislation, conducts an annual ISAE 3000 Type 2 review and works according to ISO 27001 standards. Assembly Voting works with Exoscale hosting centres in Munich and Geneva that are ISO/IEC 27001:2013, ISO/IEC 27017:2015 and ISO/IEC 27018:2019 compliant.

Assembly Voting operates a digital-signature login procedure that requires a registration number and an election code for every end user in order to access the digital ballot.

Assembly Voting uses mix-nets as well as zero-knowledge proofs and a blockchain bulletin board to help ensure the security of the voting process, claiming to provide end-to-end verifiability.

Mission / Vision

The mission of Assembly Voting is to ensure that "every vote is counted as cast".

The organization's narrow specialization on voting activity allows it to build a strong foundation for its solutions by putting the emphasis on issues of security.

p. 102

v. 16

Year founded:
2012

HQ Country:
NEW ZEALAND

LOOMIO

Overview

The Loomio platform began in 2011 as a way of organizing activists from Occupy Wall Street and social entrepreneurs from the Enspiral network. It focuses on facilitating inclusive decision-making without the need to hold meetings. Since 2019, Loomio Limited has become a for-profit social enterprise owned by the worker-owned Loomio Cooperative.

https://www.loomio.com/

Name: Loomio
Type of organisation: Private company
CEO: Rahul Watson Govindan

PB DM Id D/C PC

Scope of Offering

Loomio enables group decision-making by combining three elements: Groups, Threads, and Polls.

Creating a Group is the first step in Loomio's decision-making process. Organizations can create multiple groups or a single Group which can be divided into Sub-Groups as necessary. Group members can then create Threads to share information, discuss, and make decisions. Threads can be available to all group members or limited to selected members. Members can also create Polls, which are fully-integrated with Threads, in order to vote and reach decisions within the Group. As the thread and polling process are integrated, members can hold a series of iterative polls (e.g. with differing options) within the same thread. Loomio supports four different types of proposal: Sense Check, Advice, Consent, and Consensus and four polling options: Simple Poll, Score Poll, Dot Vote, and Ranked Choice.

Loomio also integrates with collaboration tools such as Slack, Microsoft Teams, Discord, Matrix, and Mattermost.

Ability to Execute

Loomio consists of a small team of four people in operational roles, as well as four advisors. While long-term employment can lead to co-ownership as part of Loomio's cooperative model, Loomio also enables project-based roles.

Loomio provides an extensive number of case studies and testimonials, from Teal organizations (where workers self-manage an organization), boards and cooperatives to unions, activists and political parties, enabling Loomio to demonstrate both organizational and political impact. Of particular note is Loomio's work with Generation Zero, a youth-led climate organization in promoting the Zero Carbon Act in New Zealand in 2019.

Security

Loomio is an open-source software licensed under the GNU Affero General Public Licence v3.0. It offers four hosting solutions across the US, Australia, Amsterdam or private hosting in a country of choice.

Loomio uses standard SSL encryption and CAPTCHA to prevent brute-force login attacks and spam.

Mission / Vision

The Loomio Cooperative describes itself as "exist[ing] to create a world where it's easy for anyone to participate in decisions that affect them".

Loomio is heavily focused on achieving a balance between decision-making and deliberation, and encouraging end users to surface any objections or alternative ideas they may have to a proposal.

Year founded:
2015

HQ Country:
USA

VOATZ

Overview

Headquartered in Boston, Voatz is a provider of online election solutions with an impressive level of technical sophistication. Used primarily by local municipalities and party conventions, Voatz allows voters to mark, review and submit election ballots online.

https://voatz.com/

Name: Voatz
Type of organization: Private company
CEO: Nimit Sawhney

PB   DM   Id   D/C   PC

Scope of Offering

Voatz specializes in online voting with a particular focus on voting from mobile devices (smartphones and tablets). This includes a built-in online identity verification process, in which users download a mobile app that scans the phone for malware. The voter validates themselves by uploading a government-issued ID, which is checked against the voter roll. The app generates a facial match using a motion selphie and then – after linking the device to a unique anonymous ID – deletes the personal identity information from its system.

In addition to its core election services, Voatz also offers online petitions, hybrid offline/online voting and verified polling, as well as providing training to officials and a support desk during the voting process.

Ability to Execute

Voatz has been used in over 100 elections, primarily in North America and was named a Trusted Blockchain Solution by the Government Blockchain Association (GBA) in 2023. The company has a strong emphasis on facilitating voting for people living with disability and implements a number of accessibility guidelines and best practices, including WCAG 2.1, which gives it an edge in this niche. While Voatz's partnership with early supporter Tusk Philanthropies seems to have cooled, the increased use of absentee balloting in the USA provides fertile ground for this field to grow in the future.

Security

With real votes on the line, Voatz puts significant emphasis on security, is regularly audited externally and runs a bug bounty programme to rule out any vulnerabilities in its software.

Voting data is securely transmitted to the election authority while a copy is stored on a multi-node Blockchain and an encrypted copy is returned to the voter (Voatz uses the HyperLedger Fabric Framework hosted by the Linux Foundation). The mobile app can then decrypt the voting confirmation on the user's device. This allows voters to verify that their own vote has been correctly submitted. Once voting concludes, voters can also conduct what Voatz calls a "Civic Audit" where any voter can compare any ballot against the anonymised voting record.

Mission / Vision

Voatz has a mission to "make voting safe, accessible, and secure".

Year founded:
2013

HQ Country:
NETHERLANDS

Overview

Founded in 2013, VoxVote is the creation of Dutch data scientist Vincent van Witteloostuyn and is aimed at obtaining actionable audience feedback at large meetings. Originally intended to replace the need for clickers and similar physical voting devices during audience participation at conferences, VoxVote has since been adapted for fully online use in combination with video conferencing platforms such as Zoom and Microsoft Teams.

VOXVOTE

http://www.voxvote.com

Name: VoxVote
Type of organization: Private company
CEO: Vincent van Witteloostuyn

PB **DM** **Id** **D/C** **PC**

Scope of Offering

VoxVote is a straightforward product that allows presenters to pose questions that the audience can answer online. The presenter can then display the outcomes on screen (either online or as part of a presentation in real life), along with customisable text and images. VoxVote's look and feel is designed to mimic a PowerPoint presentation which allows presenters to seamlessly move in and out of their presentation to ask questions.

Beyond this simple interface, VoxVote is a sophisticated survey product, allowing presenters to utilise simple and multiple choice questions, scored ranking, word clouds and free text questions. In addition, the software can merge results from several questions (called 'crossing' by VoxVote).

Owing to the range of question methods (and its freemium business model), VoxVote is particularly popular with educational institutions, which can also gain access to all features of the software for a basic charge of 1 EUR per day.

Ability to Execute

With a strong (and, judging by online reviews, satisfied) user base, and functionality that outpaces many commercial vendors of audience engagement software, VoxVote should be strongly positioned to grow its market share.

Its small team of six employees includes a Customer Success Manager, but no outbound sales or marketing team, making it dependent on its freemium business model (and word of mouth) to win over new customers. Still, with the right focus, and investment in sales & marketing, VoxVote could be a serious contender in the audience engagement and deliberation space.

Security

VoxVote maintains an extensive security and privacy policy, encrypts communication with their service using standard SSL (https) and salts passwords stored on the platform. VoxVote uses Microsoft Azure for Cloud Storage on European servers.

Mission / Vision

VoxVote's mission is to "allow any vote anywhere" and to replace voting hardware (such as clickers). Although the VoxVote website is informal with a clear focus on product development over other aspects of the business, over 14 million votes have been cast on the platform to date.

PART

4

Year founded:
2014

HQ Country:
ARGENTINA

DEMOCRACYOS

Overview

Democracy OS was developed in 2014 by Democracia en Red, a civil society organization in Argentina, in order to give citizens access to decision-making spaces.

https://democraciaos.org/en/

Name: Democracia en Red
Type of organisation: Non-profit
CEO: Agustín Frizzera

PB   DM   Id   D/C   PC

Scope of Offering

DemocracyOS offers five products: Participatory Budgeting; Public Consultation (users can organize pre-determined options in the order that best fits their priorities, comment or propose their own idea), Crowd Law-Making (users can choose to show support and/or contribute to a draft bill), Goal Tracking (for monitoring transparency and implementation), and Voting in Elections (users can be registered to vote on the platform via email while the identity validation is achieved by uploading an ID card).

High Level Vision

The main objective of Democracia en Red is to become the "leading organization throughout LATAM in implementing technology to open public decision making to citizens".

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v. 20

Year founded:
2018

HQ Country:
FRANCE

ELECTIS

Overview

Electis was founded in 2018 as an open-source e-voting solution. Primarily used by universities as part of electronic voting pilots, Electis builds on Microsoft's ElectionGuard SDK to secure its voting app and utilises the Tezos Blockchain in combination with the IPFS online file system to support the transparency and immutability of votes conducted on its platform.

https://www.electis.io

Name: Electis
Type of organisation: Private company
CEO: Franck Nouyrigat

PB DM Id D/C PC

Scope of Offering

On the surface, Electis is a simple online voting solution, with advanced encryption. Each individual vote is encrypted and stored on the IPFS (Interplanetary File System) and a "fingerprint" or hash of the individual vote is stored on the Tezos Blockchain, which allows for later verification. A smart contract created on the Tezos Blockchain automatically publishes the encrypted results of the election once it closes. The organiser then unlocks or decrypts this result using a private key downloaded prior to the election.

High Level Vision

The goal of Electis is to create "a cross-border community" and give this community "a place to engage in debate and promote democratic solutions". To date, Electis remains heavily focused on perfecting the security of digital elections with the core of its activity centered on updates to this area.

Year founded:
2015

HQ Country:
USA

POLIS

https://pol.is/

Overview

Polis, developed by the Computational Democracy Project, is a scalable decision-making and deliberation solution.

Name: The Computational Democracy Project
Type of organization: Non-profit
CEO: Colin Megill

PB DM Id D/C PC

Scope of Offering

Participants are invited to create short statements or comments on a particular topic and each participant in turn is then able to vote on each of these statements by either agreeing, disagreeing or "passing" (abstaining). All statements and their related votes are stored in what in Polis is called an "Opinion Matrix", a table consisting of multiple columns (statements) and rows (individual participant votes). Data science techniques are then applied to interrogate this data to create heatmaps, opinion groupings and other insights which enable organisers and participants to pinpoint areas of consensus and division and to address these. Arguably most famously, Polis was used by the vTaiwan movement to understand participant sentiment on political decisions in Taiwan, such as the regulation of Uber drivers. More recently, Polis was used by PolicyLab (UK) and CITRA (Finland) to generate feedback on various policy options.

High Level Vision

Released under an open-source license, Polis is described by its creators as "a real-time system for gathering, analysing and understanding what large groups of people think in their own words, enabled by advanced statistics and machine learning".

PART

5

Origin of Photo Material

List of Tables and Data Visualisations

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SDI
Solonian
Democracy
Institute

The Solonian Democracy Institute was founded in 2017 to research and to further understanding of alternative democratic practices. In particular, the Institute looks at ways to deepen participation beyond elections and to substantially increase the number of people meaningfully involved in political decision-making. The Solonian Democracy Institute also investigates inter-disciplinary issues that have a bearing on democracy, such as economic equality.

The Institute takes its name from Solon, the statesman who ushered in reforms that created the foundations for the development of democracy in ancient Athens. Solon is also credited with uttering many wise sayings, among them our slogan: Justice, even if slow, is sure.

The Institute has a strong focus on the history of alternative democratic practice. What differentiates the Institute is our understanding of the term democracy which is derived from the ancient Greek word demokratia, itself composed of the words demos and kratos – people power. Putting political power in the hands of the people is at the centre of everything we do.